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DRAMATICS

An Educational Magazine for Dramatic Arts Students of Dramatic Arts

Vol. XXXIII, No. 1

OCTOBER, 1961

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MARY MILLER

THE COMPANY
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BREAKING THE
TALENTS' BARRIER

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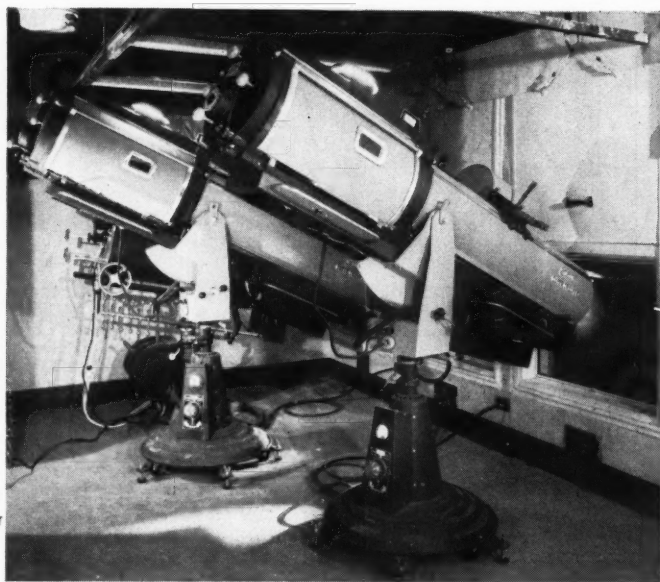
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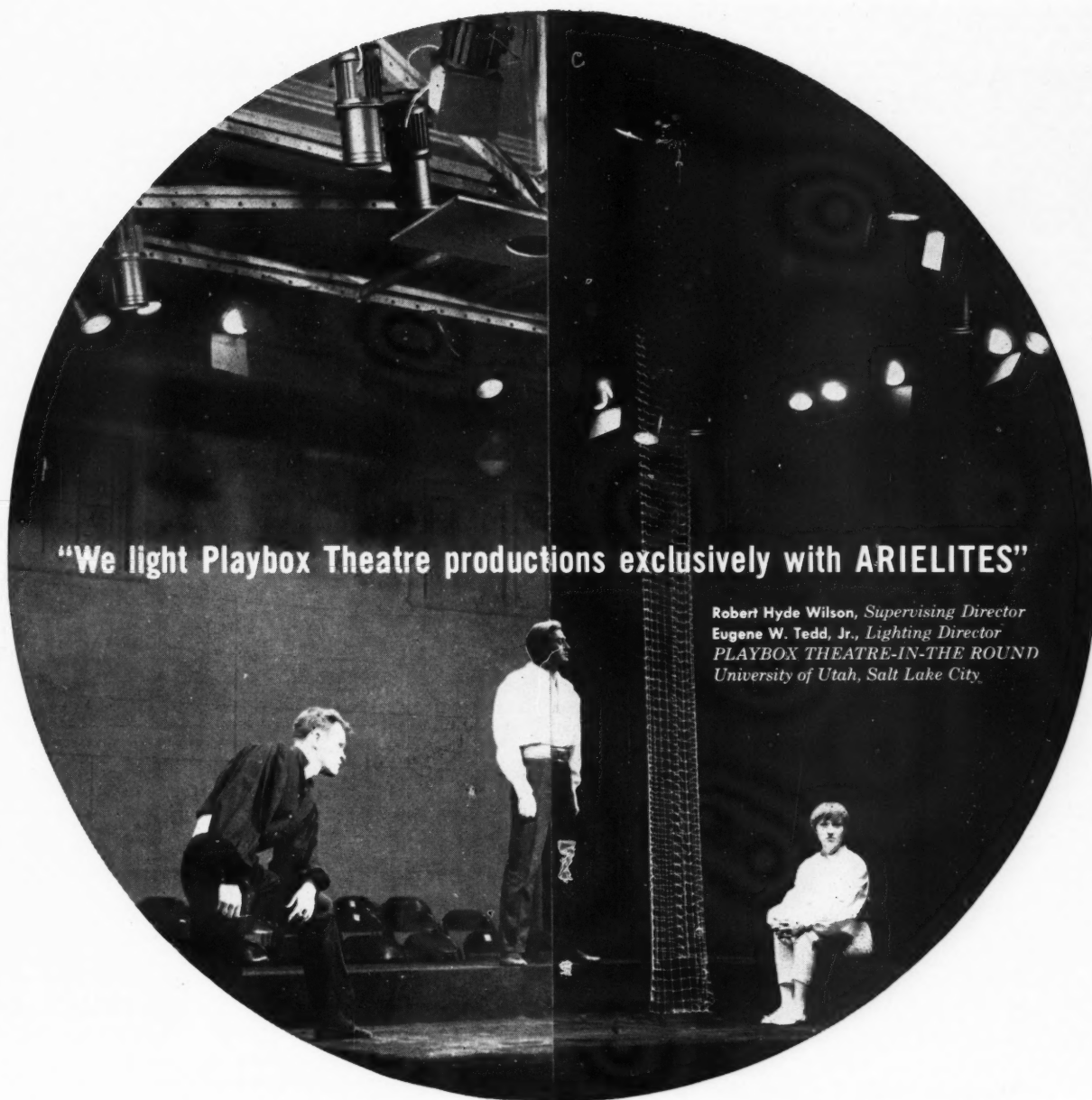
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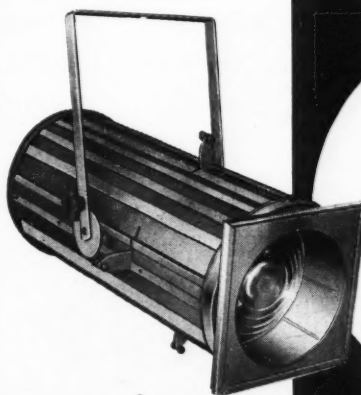
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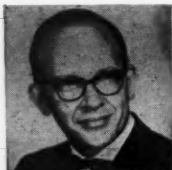


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HAROLD B. Obee, Assistant Professor of Speech and Play Director at Bowling Green State University (Ohio), authors our second series of eight articles, *Stage Lighting*. His first four years of teaching were in high schools in the Cincinnati area; the last fifteen years have been at Bowling Green State University. In 1955 he was Associate Technical Director of the *Seventeenth Star*, Ohio's Sequi-Centennial Historical Drama. In 1957 and 1958 he was on the staff of B.G.S.U.'s Huron Summer Theatre. He has directed plays for church and community theatres and served as consultant for numerous high school groups. He is a member of the Speech Association of America, the American Educational Theatre Association, and Theta Alpha Phi, honorary dramatics fraternity. Dr. Obee is well qualified both through study of and experience with the high school theatre to write this series, which come next summer will be reprinted in booklet form.



Harold B. Obee

G. THOMAS Tanselle, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, in writing the article about Mary Miller, found it to be a delightful chore, for Miss Miller is his beloved Aunt. Miss Miller during the 32 years as Thespian Sponsor at the same school is a living symbol of all our Thespian faculty sponsors who dedicated, or are dedicating their lives to high school students by teaching principles of honor, self-sacrifice, and loyalty through the high school theatre.

THE *Company You Keep* originally was an address delivered by Dr. William R. McGraw of the University of Oregon at our annual Oregon Thespian High School Drama



Conference held on the campus of that university on February 3 and 4. Your editor, tremendously impressed with the speech, requested Dr. McGraw to write it for *DRAMATICS*. Here it is—and it has an important message for all of us.

EUGENE K. Bristow (Ph.D., State University of Iowa, 1956) is assistant professor of speech and theatre, Indiana University, and director of the Indiana Speech and Theatre High School Institute. As student and instructor in high school, college, and university, he has acted in or directed more than one hundred productions. In addition to contributing book reviews and articles to *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Educational Theatre Journal*, *The Speech Teacher*, and *The Southern Speech Journal*, Mr. Bristow is currently News editor of the *Educational Theatre Journal* and Brief Views editor of *Dramatics*.



Eugene Bristow

EARL Blank, our Plays of the Month Editor, opens the new season with lightness, comedies which have universal appeal, rather than the heavy dramas and tragedies. Our opening four plays are *The Snow Queen* and *the Goblin*, a children's theatre play; *The*

Wonderful Adventures of Don Quixote, a costume piece; *Let Us Be Glamorous*, whose theme centers around high school problems; and *Gramercy Ghost*, a fantasy comedy. These productions, written by our own Thespian sponsors, may help you find quickly your next play.

DR. Delwin B. Dusenbury, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, will conclude in this year's eight issues his series on the History of American Motion Pictures. His first article is entitled *Breaking the "Silents" Barrier*, in which he describes the first steps taken by the movie industry from silent motion pictures to sound. By the end of next summer this series will complement Dr. Dusenbury's series of the past year, now a Thespian publication, *The History of American Motion Pictures to 1927*.



Delwin B. Dusenbury

THEATRE for Children features in its opening article for this school year the innovation of Children's Theatre as a part of the Community Theatre program at the Playhouse in the Park, Philadelphia, Pa. Troupe 1000, Upper Darby Senior High School, played a very important role.

FINALLY, do not miss our several features: 1961-62 State and Regional Conferences, 1960-61 Play Summary, Thespian Scoreboard, Thespians in Action, Thespian Regional Directors, and of course our Thespian Chatter.

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"I would like to express my gratefulness to you for the assistance you have granted our troupe during the past year. Affiliation with the National Thespian Society was definitely a 'shot in the arm' that our dramatics department needed. I cannot recommend too highly the work of your organization and the fine spirit with which we were granted aid whenever we contacted your office."—James J. Valesano, Sponsor, Troupe 2097, 1960-61, East High School, Aurora, Ill.

Troupe 2059, College High School, Greeley,
Colo.

We look forward to continuing our cooperative and friendly relationships with Dr. Falls, who was associated with dramatic activity at the University of Vermont since 1952. At Vermont Dr. Falls established an annual Summer Shakespeare Festival, was instrumental in inaugurating a Festival of Fine Arts, and established an Arena Theatre, modeled after the Penthouse Theatre at the University of Washington.

THE Speech Association of America will hold its next convention at the Hotel Statler, New York City, December 27-30, 1961. Numerous sectional meetings devoted to specialized areas of Speech and Theatre are on the agenda. More than 2000 teachers of Speech and Theatre are expected to attend. For reservations and further information contact the Speech Association of America, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

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Ward Leonard Electric Company, Mount Vernon, New York, has issued a beautifully colored, illustrated booklet, titled Solitrol Lighting Systems, which is available too for the asking. The emphasis here is on flexible lighting control which combines the theatrical knowledge and dramatic lighting philosophy of professional showmen with the technical "know-how" of Ward Leonard engineers. The designs, pictures, and explanations, easily understandable by the average layman, are its outstanding features.

10

The Woman At Dead Oaks

By JOHN KIRKPATRICK

Mystery 3 Acts

5 MEN
7 WOMEN

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Who was the woman at Dead Oaks? Her name was Sylvia Merriott; she had red hair; and she was always seen wearing gloves. But who was she really? Hannah didn't know; nor the real estate people; and the taxi driver had seen her only once. Fran met her through her aunt and the woman offered Fran the use of the lonely old house in Connecticut. But from the moment Fran and her friends arrived, warnings began to appear. Judy felt sure there was someone else in the house. Mr. Merriott? Hal was slugged upstairs; Rose tried to summon help but the wires were cut; Fran's hands were slashed by someone who wanted the clipping. As the fog thickened outside, panic mounted inside. Irene's body was found stuffed in a cupboard; and Lissie who had looked through a window and seen something was strangled with the cord of a dressing-gown. Ever-increasing terror stalks through the three acts until in a tense moment the murderer is trapped and the identity of "Mrs. Merriott" revealed. But even after that — well, there is one more surprise concerning the woman at Dead Oaks.

Wouldn't It Be Wonderful

Comedy 3 Acts

By BERNICE MARTIN

5 MEN
5 WOMEN

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Ruth, who has a brother and sister, envies her friend Daphne, an only child; and Daphne envies Ruth for the family she does not have. Daphne also has an invented friend who has grown up with her since early childhood. The friend enters in a aura of fantasy and arranges for the two girls to exchange identities. The families are thoroughly confused by the abrupt changes in their daughters' personalities. Dates, and family and school affairs become baffling in a truly comic situation, much to the bewilderment of the other characters and the amusement of the audience. As for the girls themselves, the enlightenment is startling. Each realizes how puffy a fume is envy, and acquires a new insight into the values of her own identity and purposefulness in life. Each also comes to a better understanding of the other, and enlarges her own personality accordingly. A glowing comedy on a subject deeply touching the anxieties and desires of most teen-age girls. All the parts in the play are for young people. An excellent High School Play.

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OCTOBER, 1961

11

MARY MILLER

Thespian Sponsor, 1929-1961

By G. THOMAS TANSELLE

LAST May 5, when the final curtain came down on the senior class play, *Men Are like Streetcars*, at the high school auditorium in Danville, Illinois, it also brought to a close one of the remarkable careers in American high school dramatics. Mary Miller, who had been the sponsor of Thespian Troupe 59 since the founding of the Thespian Society in 1929 (and one of only two sponsors in the United States who have been with the same troupe this long), retired last spring from active participation in this field of dramatics.

During her long period of service Miss Miller has made high school dramatics in Danville one of the most popular and important activities in the lives of the students and of their parents as well. When she took over the Dramatic Club in 1926, it had 25 members; in 1929, when the group became Thespian Troupe 59, the membership was 60; now it is limited to 200. One of the greatest honors than can come to a student at Danville High School is to appear in the play and become a member of Thespians (which Miss Miller has always used as an honorary organization for dramatics — there were only three members in 1929, but now more than 30 seniors each year make "National Thespian"). Each February for 36 years Miss Miller has directed a Dramatic Club play, and each year in May she has directed the senior class play, making a total of 72 major productions in her career (in addition to numerous one-act plays which she supervised, inaugurating in Illinois the system of student directors for one-acts). Another measure of her accomplishment is to compare the proceeds of the 1926 production, which amounted to \$150, with the \$1300-1400 that each recent production has taken in on its one-night run. The 2000 seats of the auditorium are always filled.

In addition to her work in dramatics, Miss Miller has served as the head of the Department of English in Danville for 32 years and, since 1948, as Dean of Danville Junior College (and has been recognized for her achievement in *Who's Who in the Midwest*, *Who's Who in American Education*, and *Who's Who of American Women*). Although she will no longer be the sponsor of Troupe 59, she will be Consultant in Dramatics for the high school and will continue to direct the Junior College (and the college dramatics), and she has recently been appointed Coordinator of English for the Danville Junior and Senior High Schools.



MARY MILLER

Despite all her activities, she has always found time to make important contributions to dramatics, both locally and nationally. She has made Danville's stage one of the best-equipped high school stages in the state with the installation of new spots and floods, a sound system, new curtains, and concert drops; she initiated in 1938 an annual Dramatic Club Alumni Banquet, which now draws an attendance of over 200; she has taken a group to the National Dramatic Arts Conference at Indiana University seven times; she has served as Central Illinois Thespian State Director (1959-60); and she has written articles for *DRAMATICS* on the occasions of the Society's twentieth and twenty-fifth anniversaries (in the February issues of 1949 and of 1954). Still another mark of distinction is that several alumni of the DHS Dramatic Club have become famous in the world of show business — such as Bobby Short, Millie Trares Schaefer (about whom Miss Miller wrote in the October 1960 *DRAMATICS*), and Dick Van Dyke (who called Miss Miller from New York during the last Alumni Banquet on December 19, 1960).

Miss Miller has made high school drama one of the central concerns of her life. Among my own earliest memories are her discussions with my mother about her current play — for Miss Miller is my aunt. I can recall her doing the same things in the late 1930's that she was still doing, with just as much enthusiasm, last year: coming home (to Lebanon, Indiana) on weekends, reading dozens of plays and selecting one at last, spending long hours plotting the action, writing song parodies and skits to use in the elaborate convocation programs (almost major productions in themselves) to advertise the play, and — finally — talking

over how the present year's play was the best one yet. I also remember attending some of her plays (*Fog Island* particularly) when I was in Thespians at my own high school — and I always looked upon her productions as the "big time." She was expressing what she knew from experience when she wrote, twelve years ago, that the director "must 'live' the play every day as completely as she hopes her actors will live it when the big night comes. The hours of practice may add lines of fatigue to her face, but she can stand these because of the pleasure she derives from the friendly spirit of cooperation she receives from the cast and backstage crew."

Season after season dramatics at DHS managed to have the atmosphere of a miniature Broadway (Miss Miller once wrote that "the heart of the nation's theatre is not Broadway" but rather "in the high schools of our land"). Her policy of choosing (usually) new plays written especially for high schools rather than established classics was in part responsible for this feeling. Not only were the plays suitable for the capacities of high school actors, but also there was a sense of newness about the whole affair that a classic could not have. Her first production, in the fall of 1925, was *The Whole Town's Talking*, presented by the Girls Club and Boosters Club; on April 23, 1926, her first Dramatic Club play was *The New Poor*, followed in succeeding years by *The Lucky Break*, *Just Like Judy*, and *On the Hiring Line*. In the thirties came *The Meal Ticket*, *Skidding*, *The Youngest*, *The Goose Hangs High*, *Vanity*, *Big Hearted Herbert*, *The Gypsy Trail*, *Growing Pains*, *Happy-Go-Lucky*, and *Early to Bed — Early to Rise*. During the war years there were *Janey's*

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The Company You Keep

By WILLIAM R. McGRAW

FREQUENTLY we ask ourselves, "why am I doing what I am doing?" Nearly everyone does this at one time or another whether he be a doctor, lawyer, teacher, bus driver, or student. It is a question that can be asked about a profession, a major course of study, or even a hobby. Sometimes the answer comes readily. Sometimes our parents supply the answer. Sometimes the answer never comes, and occasionally there are those who never ask it. Most of us, however, are impelled to question our motives—that is, if we hope to be happy; otherwise, in continuing the endeavor we seem only to be putting in time, perhaps until something better comes along.

I wonder what answers we would get if such a question were asked tonight here in this banquet room? Specifically of course the question is "Why are you working in theatre?" Among the answers would certainly be: "It's fun"; "I get to act"; "I meet all kinds of interesting people"; "I can represent the school in interscholastic competition"; and, above all, "It gives me a chance to attend such events as the State Drama Conference!" Now I would be the last to deny these benefits, but I am sure you would agree that they alone do not justify the time and energy that you and your directors expend during the course of the year. How many of you regard this as something to do because you are not on the football team or basketball team or rally squad or even the forensics squad? How many of you think of it as a minor extracurricular activity put in the shade by those activities which attract larger crowds? Perhaps not many of you, but I wonder how many could defend his participation in theatre to someone who might challenge its worth? For the next few minutes I should like to talk with you about the company you keep and, in so doing, perhaps suggest some facts that could be used as evidence in your defense.

But first, another question or two. Do you envy those who participate in an activity that boasts such names as Norm Van Brocklin, Joe Bellino, or Terry Baker? Or do you envy those who learn the skills used in the legislature or court room? Are you able to point to comparable men and women in the theatre of whom you would be just as proud? You will probably have some difficulty, especially if you look to the stars of Hollywood or Broadway. (Unfortunately with these people less is heard of their art than of their social indiscretions.) But you ask, "Aren't these our leaders?" Unfortunately they do seem to be our leaders by virtue of public attention, but if you will forgive my sidestepping that issue I should like to suggest who our real leaders and compatriots are.



Gilbert, Minn., High School, Troupe 320, Robert Schmidt, Sponsor 1960-61, won fifth prize with its production of *The Matchmaker* in the national contest sponsored by Samuel French, New York City.

In the first place, this is a much bigger fraternity than most people realize. Organized theatre goes back thousands of years. "Oh well," you reply, "so do all aspects of civilized society." But compare, let us say, the athletes of history to men of the theatre and concomitantly their impact upon our time. More questions. How many of you can name a champion discus thrower who lived six centuries before Christ? It is not easy, is it? And yet, all of you here can name an actor-playwright of that time, Thespis. How many of you can name the leading swordsman of 1600 in England? I confess I cannot, although I am sure history has it recorded somewhere. On the other hand, there is not a single person in this room who has not heard of Shakespeare, who was first an actor before becoming a dramatist. Before baseball was invented, there was a man in this country whose name will go down as one of the greatest actors of all time, Edwin Booth. Bringing it even closer, how many of you can name one title of a speech given by any one of our leading public figures in the 1920's or 30's? Some of you probably can, but more of you, I dare say, have heard of Eugene O'Neill's *Desire under the Elms* or Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*. And to conclude this comparison, how much impact on the future do you think Mickey Mantle will have compared to Arthur Miller or Tennessee Williams?

Mentioning O'Neill and Shakespeare reminds me of one of the great catastrophes of the theatre, which is the separation that has occurred throughout history between plays and the institution that puts them on the stage. We must not think of them as separate, although in our learning how to act, make costumes and build sets we are inclined to leave the discussion of plays to English departments. All we need to do is look at the greatest periods in the history of the theatre to discover how much a part of production were the written plays. In ancient Greece, for instance, where in-

cidentally theatre was closely related to the religion of the people, some of the leading playwrights were actors, just as was Plautus the Roman, whose plays have survived some twenty centuries. We have already alluded to Shakespeare, but perhaps an even better example can be found in the later 17th century when an actor-director, Moliere, was responsible for the greatest comedies France ever produced. The theatre, in other words, is not only a place where great plays are staged, but it is also responsible for the very existence of some of the greatest literature ever written.

A student said to me once, "Well, if I'm going to spend so much time and money on school, I've got to do something practical." By "practical" I suppose he meant something that has immediate money-earning potential. Such a statement reveals to me a current attitude in education. We feel we must prepare ourselves for our little niche in this complex, scientific age by becoming specialists. We must at all costs prepare ourselves for a vocation, a process which frequently precludes our learning anything which does not have a direct relationship to our "field." Meanwhile we seem to know less and less about our fellow men; we pay little attention to what history tells us; we possess only a vague idea of what our cultural heritage is; in short, we have been taking what is actually the least practical course of action.

It should be obvious by now that what I am talking about is the value of a liberal education, and I assure you this applies to high school students just as much as it does to those in college. For many centuries now man has made great scientific advances, but tragically enough does not seem to be any wiser than he was in the time of Aristotle. He knows *how* to do more things, but he does not know *why* he is doing them. He can analyze in terms of chemical components

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Breaking the "Silents" Barrier

By DELWIN B. DUSENBURY

FOREWORD

Ben Hecht, the dynamic writer of short stories and at one time one of Hollywood's highest-paid screen writers, has said, "The movies are one of the bad habits that corrupted our century." This is harsh criticism of what has been claimed to be "the liveliest and most popular art of the twentieth century." Fortunately, the writer agrees with the latter rather than with Mr. Hecht or this series of articles may not have been written.

True, in the early days of the sound film, it appeared that motion pictures had regressed rather than progressed. By 1925 the silent films had gained an artistic beauty in composition, a creativity and an excitement best described by Richard Watts, former movie critic of the New York *HERALD* as "a vitality, a freshness and a pioneering vigor in the cinema." (See *A History of American Motion Pictures to 1927*, *DRAMATICS*, October, 1960-May, 1961). The advent of radio taught the American public how to listen and influenced the public's reception of sound films and television — the culmination of electronic mass communication — which now brings to millions of Americans the sound films of the 30's and 40's, a period which was possibly Hollywood's greatest era — an era which began with the advent of the "talkies" and ended with the development of television. This series of articles will survey the transition period (1927-1929), in which the movies learned to talk; the establishment of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the pictures, directors, and "stars" it honored; specific chapters dealing with significant achievements in the sound film: the unique contributions of Walt Disney, the musical films, the biographical-historical pictures and the social problem or thesis films reflecting the changing American scene; and finally, a chapter dealing with the changes in film-making brought on by the impact of television since 1950.

A motion picture is not the product of any one single person or creative artist. One estimate indicates that some 276 different crafts are involved in the making of a single picture. Complete chapters could be devoted to the producers, the writers, the designers, the costumers, the scene technicians, the film critics and the countless other individuals comprising the industry. Of necessity the writer has focussed his attention on three general areas which are of major interest to the film-viewer: the directors, the actors, and the completed pictures. Possibly the picture's the thing which served to reflect the conscience of the complex film industry.

A word of tribute and gratitude should be expressed to the historians of films, Lewis Jacobs, Bosley Crowther, Ezra Goodman, Arthur Knight, Arthur Mayer, Terry Ramsaye, Richard Griffith, and others who are assimilating material and probing "behind the scenes" sorting out the facts from the publicity department's fiction for the future scholars of America's most influential if not always creative contribution to world art: the motion picture.

Many sources have been helpful in preparing this series, but the writer would like especially to acknowledge the invaluable and gracious assistance received from Bill L. Hendricks, Studio Publicity Director, Warner Brothers; Mort Nathanson, Publicity Manager, United Artists; Joseph P. Reddy, Public Relations Director, Walt Disney Productions; Mike Weiss,



Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, the reigning "stars of the silents," made their only film appearance together as well as their sound debut in *The Taming of the Shrew* by William Shakespeare ("with additional dialogue by Sam Taylor," a screen credit that will never be forgotten).

Paramount Film Distributing Corporation, Philadelphia; the Museum of Modern Art Film Library, the New York Public Library, and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

The writer gratefully acknowledges the assistance of a Grant-in-Aid for faculty research from Temple University which made possible the completion of this study.

KING VIDOR, veteran director, whose productions range from *The Crowd* (1928) to *Solomon and Sheba* (1959), tells of his experience at the premiere of *The Big Parade* (1925), one of the last great "silents," in which he had a scene showing a bugler announcing the movement of troops to the front:

I asked Thalberg (the producer) if I might bring a bugler to the theatre to supply the sound effect for this close-up, and one other later on in the film. As we approached the big moment of assembly call, the audience was spellbound. I anticipated the thrill that was to come as the bugle call blasted throughout the theatre. But when the excited bugler ran from headquarters on the screen, there was nothing in the theatre but a few squeaks and bubbles. Our bugler huffed and puffed without shame, but no clear notes came forth. With the close-up finished, he continued to struggle away. I literally crawled under my seat.

Still, Vidor's experience was no less embarrassing than that of Douglas Shearer when he attempted to use radio as a means of bringing voice to the screen. He arranged to have a trailer advertising a new picture starring his sister Norma and Lew Cody shown in the theatre at the precise moment when the actors themselves were broadcasting from a Los Angeles radio station. By having the broadcast amplified through the theatres loudspeakers while the silent film trailer was being shown, it would appear that the actors were talking. The obvious

problem of a lack of synchronization developed with the ludicrous result that while Lew Cody's lips were moving the audience heard Norma Shearer's voice.

The introduction of sound to the silent film had been intriguing film makers since the invention of motion pictures (c.a. 1889). The growth of radio in the 20's accelerated the attempts to link sound with the picture, but even as early as 1913 Thomas Edison had developed the "kinetophone" in which phonograph records were played behind the motion picture screen. In the pioneering days live sound effects were often used off-stage to enhance the visual effect of the screen images. In the studios too directors discovered that actors often responded to live or recorded mood music while performing before the cameras. The basic problems facing the inventive genius of Edison and his colleagues was 1) how to record the sound on film and 2) how to develop amplification of the sound in the theatre. Much of the credit for breaking the "silents" barrier goes to Dr. Lee De Forest (1871-1961), who invented the audion tube (1906), which later was developed into the high-vacuum tube so essential to modern radio by the Western Electric laboratories. By 1924 De Forest had demonstrated a sound-on-film recording in his laboratory, while at the Fox Studios Theodore W. Case had recorded voice on film (Phonofilm) although the speed of the film through the camera distorted the voice. In the meantime Western Electric had advanced developments in the electrical transmission of sound, and the enterprising Warner Brothers — Harry, Jack, Albert and Sam — at that time a relatively small film production company, joined with them to promote a sound system

(Vitaphone), consisting of a sound-on-discs 13 to 17 inches in diameter. In 1925 experimental studios were established in New York's Manhattan Opera House. The recording studio became the boarded-over orchestra pit which was carefully sound-proofed with cloth hung from the chandeliers and around the booth. Only short films were made. The brothers Warner had been in films since 1906 when they took over a converted store in New Castle, Pennsylvania. By 1916 they had leased a small Hollywood studio. Their first major film was a successful adaptation through the use of newsreels and dramatization of the true experiences of Ambassador James W. Gerard, titled *My Four Years in Germany* (1917). The success of the film due to its timeliness led to films featuring "name" stars, such as John Barrymore and the original Rin-Tin-Tin, who had nothing to fear from the advent of sound and continued to "star" until his death in 1932 as well as film adaptations of "best-sellers," such as *Babbitt* and *Main Street*. August 6, 1926, saw the culmination of their efforts when at the Warner Theatre, New York, a series of Vitaphone short subjects was introduced by a speech-on-film by President Will Hays of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, thus heralding the modern miracle. The program featuring musical selections by well-known concert and operatic stars, such as Giovanni Martinelli, Mischa Elman, Efrem Zimbalist, Harold Bauer, was climaxed by the feature film presentation, *Don Juan*, with a special musical score recorded for the film. While the actors, including John Barrymore, did not speak, the audience heard the clashing of swords during the magnificent duel in the film. The program met with unprecedented success and indicated that the American movie-going public was prepared for sound films. By the end of 1926 a second program with the war comedy, *The Better 'Ole*, plus a series of appearances by popular entertainers including Al Jolson, George Jessell, Elsie Janis was presented, and some one dozen theatres were equipped with Vitaphone. William Fox and Theodore Case had continued with their sound-on-film experiments under the name "Movietone," but in order to amplify their sound they had to obtain a license to use Western Electric's amplification system. Thus both Vitaphone and Movietone were under the control of Western Electric which in turn formed its own successful subsidiary, Electrical Research Products, Inc., (ERPI), to manufacture and install sound systems.

Fox first introduced sound in their newsreel, Fox Movietone News, in April, 1927, at New York's now-dismantled Roxy Theatre and followed on May 25, 1927, with the premiere of *Seventh Heaven*, a silent picture with a synchronized sound score. Earlier in 1927 Warner Brothers offered John Barrymore in

1960-61 FULL LENGTH PLAYS

The following are the most frequently produced full-length plays (all categories) by Thespian affiliated schools during the 1960-61 school year. This list was tabulated from the Annual Reports of 1560 Thespian affiliated schools. Publication of this list is not to be interpreted as a Thespian recommended play-list, nor does it represent overall statistics of the national secondary school theater.

TITLE	Number of Productions
Ask Any Girl	78
Our Town	74
Diary of Anne Frank	69
Curious Savage	67
You Can't Take It with You	50
Night of January 16th	48
Arsenic and Old Lace	46
Our Hearts Were Young and Gay	40
Bull in a China Shop	35
Oklahoma	35
Time Out for Ginger	35
The Man Who Came to Dinner	33
The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis	33
Harvey	30
The Death & Life of Larry Benson	29
Teahouse of the August Moon	28
The Matchmaker	25
South Pacific	23
Meet Me in St. Louis	22
Swingin' High	22
I Remember Mama	21
Onions in the Stew	21
Annie Get Your Gun	20
The Glass Menagerie	19
The Little Dog Laughed	19
Little Women	19
Mrs. McThing	19
Brigadoon	18
Cheaper by the Dozen	18
January Thaw	18
Stage Door	18
The Importance of Being Earnest	17
The Family Nobody Wanted	16
Carousel	15
Down in the Valley	15
Rocket in His Pocket	15
Blithe Spirit	14
Cinderella	14
H.M.S. Pinafore	14
A Man Called Peter	14
Mother Is a Freshman	14
All My Sons	13
Conn. Yankee in King Arthur's Court	13
Curtain Going Up	13
The Doctor in Spite of Himself	13
George Washington Slept Here	13
The King and I	13
My Three Angels	13
Remarkable Incident at Carson Corners	13
The Solid Gold Cadillac	13
The Crucible	12
The Egg and I	12
The People vs Maxine Lowe	12
Antigone	11
Charley's Aunt	11
Gidget	11
Gramercy Ghost	11
Life with Father	11
Lock, Stock and Lipstick	11
The Mikado	11
Pride and Prejudice	11
Ten Little Indians	11
We Shook the Family Tree	11
Finian's Rainbow	10
The Ghosts Go West	10
The Great Big Doorstep	10
Inherit the Wind	10
The Perfect Idiot	10
Stardust	10
Taming of the Shrew	10
The Wizard of Oz	10

When a Man Loves with a special musical score plus another program of Vitaphone short subjects and in April, 1927, moved their sound operation to Hollywood to begin production on *The Jazz Singer*, starring Al Jolson. It was partly silent and included singing sequences. The first line of dialogue recorded by Vitaphone (sound-on-disc) was Jolson's ad-libbed, "Wait a minute! You ain't heard nothin' yet."

The cost of equipping a theatre for sound was \$8,000 to \$15,000 so that even by the end of 1927, after the sensational success of the New York showing of *The Jazz Singer* (October 6, 1927) a little over 150 theatres were equipped for sound. Benjamin Hampton in his *A History of the Movies* indicates the reluctance of the older movie tycoons to admit a new era was dawning:

...the autocrats of 1925-26 rejected talkies because of their convictions that talkies were not good enough to satisfy the masses. Blinded by their own vast empire, by the brick and mortar of their temple-theatres, . . . the pioneers of yesterday had grown cautious, fearful of endangering the solid position they so comfortably enjoyed.

In May, 1928, Paramount, United Artists, and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer bowed to the inevitable and acquired studio sound equipment under the Movietone patent.

In 1928, along with the synchronized musical scores and sound effects, dialogue sequences were being added to films originally made as "silents." Hollywood began the expensive process of retooling its studios and constructing sound-proof stages. Probably the most significant change technically was the one involving the speed of the camera. The silent camera photographed a scene at 60 feet a minute while the new sound cameras required 90 feet a minute in order to synchronize the image with the sound. Directors and actors had a difficult time in adjusting to the new techniques required by sound. For a time it appeared that the art of the motion picture had forgotten everything it had learned. The cameras which had formerly been mobile now proved too noisy for the microphones and had to be "frozen" in sound-proof boxes. The microphone too was "frozen" in one spot on the set. Actors were tied to the microphone afraid to move until one enterprising director (it may have been Lionel Barrymore with a microphone suspended on a fishing pole or Eddie Mannix using a long pole counterweighted by a sandbag) devised a simple method of suspending the microphone over the heads of the actors and following them as they moved about the set. The introduction of insulated cameras which could be moved or "dollied" and the microphone boom finally freed the actor and the director. The static quality evidenced in the first sound films was eliminated. The noisy arc lights were replaced by the incandescent lamp. Of greater significance

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STAGE LIGHTING IS AN ART

By HAROLD B. OBE

IMAGINE, if you will, a crisp autumn evening in October. A half-moon shines romantically upon a group of teenagers seated around a campfire. The leaping flames cast their reflections in a flitting dance on the surface of the lake a few feet away. Silhouetted against the brightness of the fire is the figure of a boy who seems to be telling a story. As he moves through the light of the flickering fire, the moon throws a shadow in front of him. The listeners seem entranced by the tale which the boy unfolds. In a few minutes he is replaced by another — this time a girl whose animated pantomime is inherently comic. She seems to be imitating the styles of vocalists, ranging from concert dignity to the gyrations of a blues singer. The young men and women sitting on the sandy beach are responsive to the action in front of them, laughing, lounging, leaning this way and that in total surrender to the antics of the performers. A "spell" seems to pervade the entire scene.

As the fire fades, the half-light from the moon gradually dominates. The movements of the succeeding pantomimists grow less exaggerated but no less picturesque. There is an outburst of laughter, and the group breaks its circle. For some strange reason they move away from the fire, two by two. What magic is there in that number? Slowly they stroll through the semi-darkness to nearby cars, and the sputter of starting engines breaks the spell which nature has conjured up for the delight of those who can appreciate the intoxication of an evening on nature's stage.

Who were these people? What were they doing and who cares why they were there? Let's break the enchantment and turn the brightness of sunlight upon the scene to find the answers. In case you haven't guessed — this was a group of National Thespians on a steak fry, their first social event of the new school year. They had spent the late afternoon paddling canoes on the lake until their ravenous appetites could stand it no longer. With stomachs shrinking, aching in an agonizing manner, they had built a fire and fried their steaks. Then, with hunger satiated, they seated themselves around the blazing logs as the darkness grew. First Joe told about his trip to New York, then Jack his work at a summer school of speech and drama. The girls were not to be denied, and one by one each took a turn in relating a story, imitating a personality, depicting a funny scene she had observed that summer or in taking-off on the new dramatics teacher who was turning out to be such a real guy. It was a highly successful event. Every person enjoyed the evening and looked upon the future months with eag-

erness. The project was a dramatic inauguration of the new year's program. But why? What made this evening so extraordinary? Was it sociology or was it sex? Was it sophisticated? Was it unique? What produced the magic which permeated this moonlit party of friends?

There are several factors probably, if we were to make a complete, scientific analysis, but let us look at just one. Could this story-telling around the campfire have produced the same effect had the action occurred under the rays of the sun instead of the moon? True, people do tell anecdotes and satirize events while seated under a beach umbrella or while sunning on a patio, but the atmosphere is entirely different. It is less romantic under the sun, and it is more diffused because there are many distracting elements within easy view. The group is less likely to be highly unified. More people are inclined to be talking at once. The mood is altered and the stories are likely to be of a different tone even though the personnel remains the same. The evening campfire is different, and probably more exciting than its counterpart could have been on the same sandy beach several hours earlier, for Mother Nature has lighted it differently. The setting and the performers are the same, the basic elements of the script are similar, but in our imaginary creative drama the play is radically changed.

Lighting can affect real-life situations. Why else do we color and reduce the intensity of lights for a party in the school gym? Aren't we trying to draw attention away from the ugly walls and ceiling to focus all eyes on the pretty gowns and graceful movements of the dancers? Why does a night club employ soft candle-light, and why is a school club's formal initiation often lighted with tapers? There must be a reason! The intense, even light of the classroom is excellent for reading, for visibility, but a few candles will transform the space

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into a ritual room. The brightness of the sun is excellent for looking at the other side of the lake, but the Man in the Moon takes advantage of Old Sol's brilliancy and transforms his beams into a soft, dramatic light to meet the needs of a party on the beach.

If we recognize the differing lighting needs of the classroom, the ritual room, the gymnasium and the party room, why do we not recognize more fully the varying needs of the stage? Numerous surveys have indicated that the majority of high schools utilize nothing but general lighting for every play. The primary purpose seems to be to illuminate the setting, the actors, and the overhead border-curtains with equal brilliancy. There is little attempt in many schools to treat stage lighting as an art although the artistic values of light are readily recognized in other areas of activity. Although a pair of candelabra may focus attention on the principal lecturer in the club initiation ritual, no thought is given to visual focus on the dramatic scene. We see athletes introduced to their audiences at the beginning of football games by darkening the area and then presenting each man in a pool of light from an arc-lamp. Yet, sometimes, the dramatic impact of spotlighting on the stage is totally ignored in the same school.

The art of lighting should be given the same attention in the theatre as elsewhere. Rembrandt and Monet are noted for the highlights and shadows which they painted into their pictures. The circus and the carnival have used special lighting for particular effects for generations.

The vaudeville stage and Broadway have been concerned with the art of stage lighting ever since the lime-light was introduced into the theatre in the second decade of the nineteenth century. Thomas Drummond, an Englishman, discovered that by directing the point of an oxyhydrogen flame against a piece of lime, the latter could be heated to an incandescence of unusual brilliancy and quality. The equipment was easily combined with a lens system which controlled the beam of light and lent itself readily to the addition of color mediums. With this instrument major performers were pin-pointed in the resulting spot of light; thus one of the earliest spotlights was developed. Capable actors were always careful to play "in the limelight" where they could be seen to best advantage. The term is now a part of our general language.

Off the stage, women often pay attention to the highlights and shadows of the face by accentuating them when applying evening make-up. The result, they hope,

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will be more dramatic and exciting. But whether painted or provided by means of properly directed lights, the reader may ask the question, "What is so exciting about high-lights and shadows?" For some, perhaps, there is no added excitement, but probably nearly everyone with a little artistic sensitivity will recognize some of the changes that different lighting achieves. The patio at mid-day is certainly different in atmosphere from the patio at mid-night. And a stage with appropriate lighting, with the right high-lights and shadows, is more conducive to artistic accomplishment than one which is illuminated strictly for visibility.

From our knowledge of theatre history, we recall that the actors of the Greek, Roman, and Elizabethan periods usually played outdoors under the broad, general lighting of the sun. They achieved artistic success without artificial spot-lighting and nocturnal atmosphere. What about them? Doesn't that represent a challenge to the aesthetic theories just propounded? The answer is "No!" Artistic principles, with which we are all familiar, concern themselves with problems of composition, movement, rhythm, and in most stage work the story-telling aspects sometimes called pantomimic dramatization. Not all artists choose to emphasize the same elements, and particularly important is the fact that each creator works within the conventions of his own day. By the term "convention," I mean the customs and usual practices of the times. In the Greek and Roman periods the wide open space on the outdoor stage was a conventional or customary place for a play to be presented. This is what the audience was used to. The high ornamentation of the Roman stage would be very distracting to the play-goer of today, as would many of our conventional practices to an avid theatre patron of the first century, B.C., had he settled himself in his time machine and moved up to see a play in the current decade. The Greeks, Romans, and Elizabethans achieved their objectives of visual focus through picturization, movement, and costuming. This was true very largely for centuries to come.

Even on the British and American stages as late as the mid-nineteenth century, only occasional attempts were made to enhance or strengthen a stage picture by means of special lighting. Night scenes by this time were played in subdued light, but daytime settings were lit evenly and as brightly in all areas as a theatre's particular equipment would allow. Experimentation with over-all stage lighting had started as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as indicated by the writings of Serlio, Sabbattini, Furtenbach, and Inigo Jones, but lighting rarely achieved artistic levels until the last half of the nineteenth century or even later. Many productions today show little imagination in the utilization of light.



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Alfred Noyes' poem *The Highwayman* would have had a commonplace plot and a galloping rhythm only had the author not provided poetic lighting for the scene. The result was an exciting tale,

as the highway rider rode the ribbon of moonlight up to the old inn-door.

The evening beach party was a success, partly because the lighting was right; the story-tellers were supported by appropriate light. The same is true for the stage. This article may seem to suggest that lighting can change a barren platform into a beautiful palace by means of the mystical qualities of light, but the mystery is largely for the uninformed. There are fundamentals which can be explained in simple terms, and succeeding articles will attempt to do this.

If the high school theatre is merely an exhibition window for new dresses and pie-throwing farces, then it has little need for specialized lighting techniques, but if the high school theatre is to take its place along with music and painting as one of the arts, then it must adhere to artistic principles in respect to its acting, its scenery, and also its lighting.

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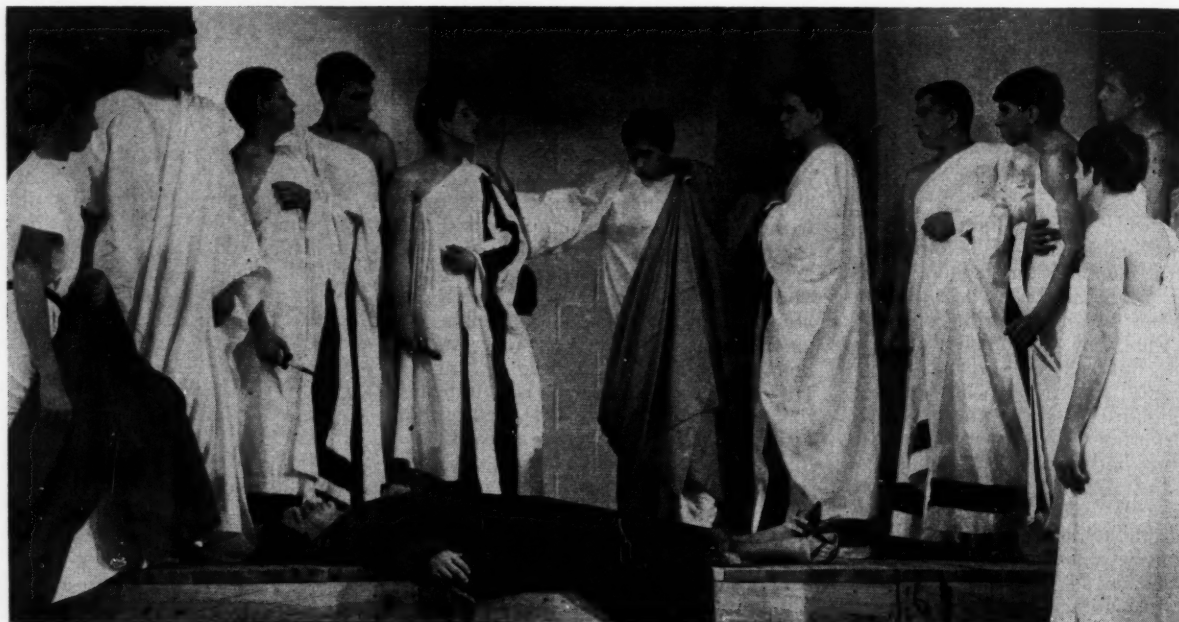
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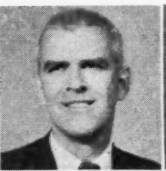
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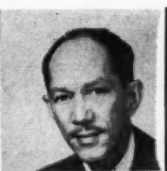
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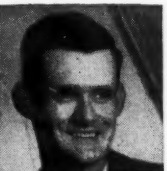
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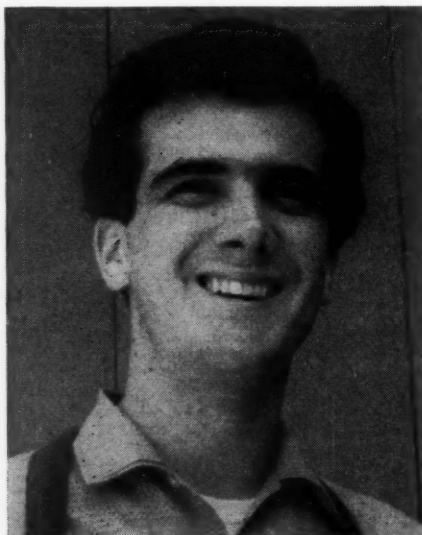
CHILDREN'S THEATRE — A PART OF COMMUNITY THEATRE

A NEW school year has begun, and Thespian troupes in more than 2200 high schools are designing their year's activities. Last year (1960-61) over 200 troupes reported production of plays for children, and a considerable number of the troupes reported as many as four or five productions during the year. Figures are not available to determine how many children were entertained by these productions, but the report is a record of growth in an area that remains underdeveloped and a continued challenge to about ninety per cent of Thespian troupes to try this type of theatre.

The sooner that Thespians realize that perhaps their most important function is their contribution to educational and community theatre rather than a wistful looking toward Broadway the sooner they will have taken their place in the vanguard of developing American theatre.

In a recent article announcing and anticipating the Silver Anniversary convention of the American Educational Theatre Association, an eminent dramatic critic cited some amazing statistics that are important to all Thespians and their sponsors. He says,

"Actually, the amount of theatre that goes on away from the professional New York stage almost staggers the imagination.



Richard Mazza
Director and Choreographer, Children's
Theatre at Playhouse in the Park,
Phila., Pa.



Terrible Plot of Ebenezer Wheezer,
Playhouse in the Park, Phila., Pa.

Although accurate figures are not available, it is calculated that dramatics are an important activity in more than 2,500 colleges and universities in this country; that some 20,000 high schools put on dramatic productions; that there are anywhere from 5,000 to 10,000 community theatres, church, industrial and other groups functioning; that together they account for a possible 35,000 to 40,000 productions annually before audiences totaling 50,000,000 persons."

Theatre is flourishing across the country, and we know that there is some work — good work in Children's Theatre being done, but it is still the neglected area, and it is one of the most challenging and rewarding areas in which to function. Look at the theatre guide in any newspaper of any city, large or small, summer or winter, and it is evident that there is a growing amount of community theatre for adults and very meager fare for children.

During the past summer in the Philadelphia area there was carried on an experiment in Children's Theatre in connection with Community Theatre which might well serve as a suggestion to Thespians across the country both for work in winter and summer. One of the best Community Theatres in the Philadelphia area is the Playhouse in the Park, a tent theatre which seats 1500 people. This summer it celebrated its tenth anniversary of providing the public with good theatre fare under the management of Mrs. Ethelyn Thrasher, but this summer something new was added — Children's Theatre. And — here is where Thespian contribution was felt in the work of Richard Mazza. Richard was a member of the executive board of Troupe 1000 during the year 1955-56. During his high school career he was active in Children's Theatre. He played the part of "Gali-fran" in *Cinderella*, the Pieman in *Simple Simon*, the King in a dance version of *Sleeping Beauty*, and the Emperor in

The Emperor's New Clothes, which was produced at the National Conference of The National Thespian Society at Indiana University in June, 1956. After graduation from high school Richard attended Penn State University, where he was active in all phases of theatre work, and began to try his hand at writing. During the summers, both during high school

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THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

CLOVERLOT

ANCHORAGE, KENTUCKY

and college, he worked as an apprentice at the Park Theatre, where his good work came to the favorable attention of the Manager. After his graduation from Penn State Richard worked with various Children's Theatre groups in New York (off-Broadway), and at the same time he continued his writing.

Finally, last winter when the summer program for the Park Theatre was being planned, the manager asked Richard to establish a Children's Theatre in connection with the Park Theatre. No, it wasn't exactly a windfall with unlimited funds and resources. He had the use of the tent and access to the scenery stockpile, but beyond that it was a matter of resourcefulness and proving that he could make the project pay its way before it would be considered as a permanent phase of the Park Theatre's offerings.

Richard had written a script for musical production, *The Terrible Plot of Ebenezer Wheezer* and his associate, who was stage manager and technical director, was the author of *The Elegant Witch*, also a script for musical production. So, an arrangement was developed whereby the two productions were given on alternate Tuesdays in two performances. Richard was the director and choreographer of both productions. Publicity was handled by a couple on a volunteer basis because they were interested in Children's Theatre. A call was sent out for actors who were both singers and

dancers who would contribute their services to this worthy project. Costumes for the most part were provided by the actors themselves. Prices of tickets were kept at a reasonable level (75¢ for individual tickets and 50¢ for tickets in groups of fifty). According to Richard mothers in the area provided invaluable service in publicizing the project to day camps and other groups so that a large percentage of the audiences was made up of these groups. An appearance on a local TV station of scenes from the production also provided valuable publicity.

During the course of the summer the two productions were given in eighteen performances to an estimated audience of more than 11,000 youngsters.

Since members of Troupe 1000 - NTS have been very successful apprentices at the Park Theatre during its ten years of operation, the management is always eager to have these Thespians in the theatre organization. Due to this pleasant relationship when the new Children's Theatre development was being planned, the call came for the recommendation of a good male actor. In response to this call, Ed Cicotelli was sent and has played in both productions and earned the leading role in *The Terrible Plot of Ebenezer Wheezer*. Ed will be next year's vice-president of Troupe 1000. He was in the cast of three children's productions of his own troupe: *The Three Bears*, *Simple Simon*, and *The Red Shoes*, in which he was seen at the National

Thespian Convention in Bloomington in 1960. He was also a valuable technical man in *Arms and the Man*, and played the part of "Elwood P. Dowd" in *Harvey*.

The Children's Theatre of The Playhouse in the Park has sufficiently proved itself in one summer that the management is convinced that it is a valuable project and is making an effort to provide a separate Children's Theatre so that in years to come it can function on a fuller schedule. Thus we have the story of one Thespian-developed Children's Theatre project in connection with community theatre in one of our major cities. This is not the only method of procedure by any means. Every situation provides its own opportunities and challenges. The point that we wish to make is simply this: There are innumerable opportunities for Thespians to make their contribution in a field in which they are especially fitted, because of youth, to function. A new year is beginning for Thespians! There are thousands of children without live entertainment! Use your talents, vigor, vitality, resourcefulness, and imagination, and make your contribution to a field in which you can take pride! Remember that this department is always eager to hear of your experiments and achievements, and we shall be eager to report your work to the readers of DRAMATICS.

1 Lewis Funke, "Theatre Is Flourishing Across the Country," *The New York Times* (July 30, 1961) Section 2, p. 1.



Let Us Be Glamorous, Troupe 223, Bradley-Bourbonnais H.S., Bradley, Ill.,
Agnes Stelter, Sponsor

LET US BE GLAMOROUS

Bradley-Bourbonnais, Ill., High School

WHEN one is faced with the autumn conflict of "actors" who are also football players, the play with the dominance of roles for girls seems ideal. We chose *Let Us Be Glamorous*, a three-act comedy by Austin Goetz, as a practical solution to this casting problem. There are eight roles for girls and four for boys, with only four of these characters requiring middle-age, or older, characterizations. Double casting in the roles of students affords an opportunity for an additional six or seven girls to participate.

Plays with a theme centering about school and its problems always seem to interest high school actors and high school audiences. When Priscilla Hopkins, the owner of an exclusive school for girls, finds her school near financial ruin, the coming of her nephew, Rex Hopkins, with his program for education in charm, presents an amazing change in the school. There is deception, intrigue, and romance, and the scenes in

which Rex teaches "Glamour" class can be very humorous.

Costuming is not difficult if there can be a happy balance between the traditional "middy-blouse-uniform" apparel and the modern after Rex has added his glamour techniques. The setting, likewise, is not difficult and may be as flexible as one desires in conveying the rather drab and conservative social room of "The Maples" school in the early scenes, and the same room in the light and cheerful atmosphere of the last two acts. With just a few changes in chairs, cushions, drapes, and minor placement of furniture, the needed "glamorization" of the set can be accomplished. Minor lighting changes can contribute to this variety of effect also.

The play, simple enough to meet the needs of the "unseasoned actor," is an ideal vehicle for a junior class group. With the very simple property and lighting plot provided, it presents no staging problems. *Let Us Be Glamorous* will never be a drab spot in your theatrical season.

AGNES STELTER
Sponsor, Troupe 223

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

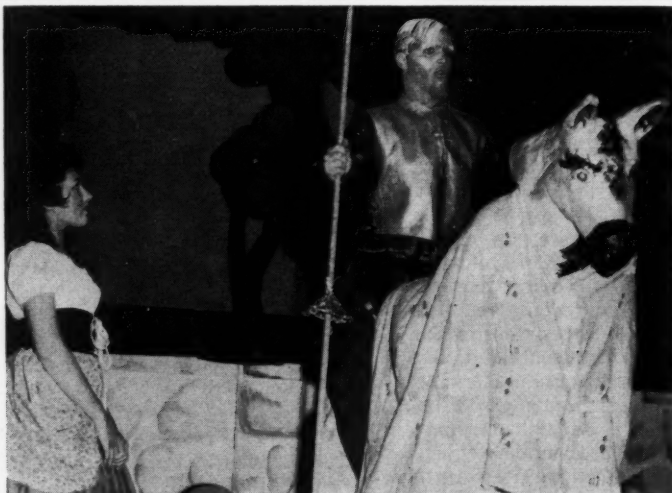
THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURES OF DON QUIXOTE

Parma, Ohio, Sr. High School

TO follow *The Robe* and precede *Cyrano de Bergerac* the juniors needed a light comedy which could be quickly and easily produced and which would provide opportunities for the growing number of students interested in dramatics at Ohio's largest high school.

The Wonderful Adventures of Don Quixote, an adaptation of comedy sequences from Cervantes' classic tale of an aging scholar who wants to revive the Age of Chivalry, met our needs. Except for two vitally important male leads, the cast of nine girls and ten boys is easily assembled and can include extras in crowd scenes. The title role requires a boy who is able to project age and still make Don Quixote's vitality believable. Sancho Panza, Quixote's sidekick, is the most demanding role, requiring an actor with a mobile face, an agile body, and a fertile imagination. Rocinante the horse, played vaudeville style by two sturdy boys, and Esteban a monkey, played by a little girl, were the highlights of the performance. Every possible opportunity to introduce slapstick emphasizing the farce situations was employed.

The impressive scenery was composed of cartoon-like, cardboard set pieces painted in vividly contrasting colors. These units, including a windmill that turned, were easily re-arranged in front of a permanent back-drop to make the five scene changes. Early Sixteenth Century costumes in brilliant colors were



The Wonderful Adventures of Don Quixote, Troupe 461,
Bradley-Bourbonnais, Ill., H.S.,
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The Snow Queen and the Goblin, Troupe 215,
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**GRAMERCY GHOST
LET US BE GLAMOROUS
SNOW QUEEN AND THE GOBLIN
WONDERFUL ADVENTURES
OF DON QUIXOTE**

selected for their humorous effect, not authenticity.

A near-capacity audience of 1700 laughed heartily and vigorously, applauded Quixote's spectacular entrance on Rocinante, his fight with the windmill, the puppet show at the Inn, and his duel with the Knight of the White Moon. While this comedy can be easily produced with the facilities of any energetic group, it offers a real challenge to the imaginations of actors, directors, designers, and audience—a challenge which promises the incomparable reward of having presented a play which is hilariously unique.

JAMES L. MAYER
Sponsor, Troupe 461

**THE SNOW QUEEN AND
THE GOBLIN**

Stambaugh, Mich., High School

IN staging *The Snow Queen and the Goblin*, dramatized by Martha Bennett from Hans Christian Anderson's story, Troupe 215 painted the scenery to resemble dark wood panelling for the attic, dominated by a frosted, leaden-paned casement window. A table covered by a fringed tapestry curtain, a tall backed rocker, a cupboard, a small wood-burning stove, and a red rose tree completed the Grandmother's attic for Act 1.

The boy and girl wore gay peasant costumes with full sleeved white blouses—a blue skirt for the girl, gray and red striped short pants, a leather jacket, Swiss suspenders and hat for the boy. The grandmother wore a black skirt with a white blouse and shawl. The scene was as beautiful as an oil painting.

For acts 2 and 3, the Snow Queen's Palace, six open archways, hinged together, ornamented with icicles cut from cardboard, were painted white with blue shadows and set before a blue back wall.

The throne, covered with white satin and plastic lace, was strung with twinkling lights.

Against this, satin costumes gleamed. The Snow Queen's net-covered, shocking pink dress was jewelled with silver snow flakes and pearls. Her guards wore silver tunics with wide puffed blue and silver striped sleeves, puffed short pants, and little pill box hats of the striped material. They carried silver spears. The enchanted children wore gray hooded costumes and gray masks. They pulled a white sled, constructed of painted cardboard over a wagon. Acha le Goblin's green suit was of quilted satin.

The rose trees were made with lath and chicken wire. The frozen one was covered with cellophane. The telescope was of wood and cardboard rolls. All were sprayed with liquid snow. The play book contained instructions for trees, the ice cake into which the girl is frozen and the melody of the Grandmother's hymn.

The beauty of the scenery, costumes, and lighting, the chanting of the children echoing through the palace, the theme—the faith and tears of a loved one can melt even the icy heart of the snow queen—make this a moving, delightful play.

HELEN DUNHAM
Sponsor, Troupe 215

GRAMERCY GHOST

Baker, Ore., Sr. High School

WHEREIN do the twain meet which cause both high school audiences and adult audiences to break up over good stage comedy? This was our problem: to stage one performance for our student body and another for a primarily adult audience. Plays that serve both groups well have proven rarities. In John Cecil Holm's delightful *Gramercy Ghost* we struck comic situation and fresh dialogue that appealed to both.

Heading the cast of twelve in this cleverly controlled mix-up of believable and unbelievable situations, Nancy Willard, young New York journalist, inherits a very believable old mansion. When Nancy meets Charley Stewart, also a young journalist, Parker, Nancy's stuffy, socially-minded fiance, shows little ap-

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CAMPTON BELL, Director

proval indeed. The eternal triangle would, however, scarcely get the play off the page were it not for Nancy's second windfall, A Revolutionary-soldier-ghost, who comes gratis with the mansion; and whom only Nancy can see. How this earth-wanderer of some 175 years entwines their lives and finally offers solutions to both their conflicts and his own, creates satisfying comedy of the finest caliber.

Our play was simply, yet strikingly, staged with a box set of a fashionable second floor apartment that opened on stage right, through French doors, to a balcony overlooking Gramercy Park. Elegance was created through flat-painted book cases, ornamental door casings and wall alcoves, and striking color contrast.

Our only major lighting problem—ghostly effect for Nathaniel—was achieved by blue glows directed just at his points of entrance. Wall alcoves allowed the illusion of entrance and exit through walls. Costuming of the Revolutionary soldier was held more as illusion than exact period.

If location dictates objection to drinking, the script is now printed with suitable dialogue changes, many of which we used.

Our final curtain fell, separating enthusiastic audiences from clearly delighted and satisfied cast and stage crew members.

KENNETH H. BROWN
Sponsor, Troupe 221

PUBLISHERS

Gramercy Ghost, Wonderful Adventures of Don Quixote, Dramatists Play Service, New York City
Let Us Be Glamorous, Samuel French, New York City
Snow Queen and the Goblin, Coach House Press, Chicago, Illinois



Gramercy Ghost, Troupe 221, Baker, Ore., Sr. H.S., Kenneth Brown, Sponsor

The spian Chatter

HEFLIN, ALABAMA

Troupe 532

The staging of *Meet Me in St. Louis* was a memorable event for the students of Cleburne County High School, from the antics of the cat to the Irish diction of Katie, the maid. The setting of the play was very effective since many families lent their family heirlooms to the property committee. Rented costumes of the period made the play even more authentic.

We had loads of fun trying to re-create the almost desperate and sometimes hilarious maneuvers of the four daughters, who when they learned that the father planned to move the family to New York, tried every thing in the book to avoid such a fate. They did not want to leave St. Louis (nor their boyfriends) just as the wonderful World's Fair was about to open, and the things they did to try to stay made the play interesting and entertaining.

All turned out well and we felt that the audience was left with a warm and satisfied feeling. As the sound of the fire-works died down at the close of the play, members of the cast felt that their production of *Meet Me in St. Louis* had been a real success. — Kathy Owens, Reporter

FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

Troupe 717

Family Portrait by Lenore Coffee and William Joyce Cowen gave us the opportunity to prove that a senior class play could be made into a professional-like performance. Unlike the usual chaotically-executed senior class play, this mythical story of Christ's family drew raves from veteran theater-goers, teachers, and from the hardest to please — fellow students.

The most difficult problem facing the large cast was giving an audible delivery in the barn-like gymnasium, completely unequipped with stage accouterment. This obstacle was alleviated by presenting the play in three-sided round, placing the audience on bleachers and raised platforms.

The stage crew's dilemma was presenting two exterior and two interior scenes of this three-act, seven-scene drama without benefit of curtain. They solved this by constructing a 10 by 14 foot dolly, upon which the Capernaum wineshop and Upper Room scenes were set up, then moved into place in the darkness.

The Biblical flavor was enhanced by the costumes, which were designed and made in as authentic a manner as possible.

The whole production was an excellent example of sixty-three individuals working to-

gether in a selfless manner. Their sincerity and dedication was largely responsible for the fact that not one note of criticism concerning the play's theme was voiced. The production received the complete cooperation of the ministerial association and was widely praised for its message. — Elizabeth Page, Publicity

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

Troupe 1036

The year 1960-1961 was our second year of Thespian affiliation. We believe we had a most successful and active year. Our goal of upgrading dramatic activities on the secondary level was reached and was most rewarding by the response from our campus (3500 students) and from our community.

Our season started off with the smash hit, *The Matchmaker*. At Christmas time a creative idea of our sponsor, Gwen Holly Simpson, was presented as Great Masterpieces of Christmas Art in living pictures. The final picture, *The Nativity of the Medici*, drew a standing ovation from a capacity audience. We participated in two festivals. We won an individual cup and second place with the play, *The Lottery*, in one festival, and ratings of merit in the other festival. Late in January we presented our Annual Experimental Theatre. Our experiments continued for three days, and each evening we had excellent audience response to our reading theatre, a children's play, a drama, and stylized comedy.

In March our troupe held its formal initiation. Eighteen new Thespians were initiated in a most impressive ceremony. Later our guests and members were entertained with French theater, *Les Precieuses Ridicules* by Moliere and *Grenachika*. Refreshments were served. In May Muir Thespians held their Spring informal initiation. This ceremony was combined with a social for graduating senior Thespians. A dinner and pool party was enjoyed by the new and old members.

In April our outstanding delegation to the Annual Shakespeare Festival at UCLA captured the coveted certificate of Meritorious Participation and first honors for the performance of scenes from *Coriolanus*. In April we also produced *The Happiest Millionaire*. A record attendance enjoyed this late, Broadway hit. In May we presented an evening of intimate theatre and performed in audience-called improvisations, and in Eugene Ionesco's plays, adapted for our use. We anticipate an exciting year in 1961-62. —Jill Perkins, Secretary

ARVADA, COLORADO

Troupe 1871

During the school year 1960-1961, the Arvada, Colorado, Thespian Troupe 1871 participated, planned, and put on many productions. The year was begun with the senior class play, *Night of January 16*. This courtroom drama drew a full house both nights of presentation. Our troupe also held an informal initiation. Our next production was the annual Redskin Follies. Each year the whole school is invited to show their talents in this production. This year's show was one of the best shows presented in past years.

The One-Act Play Festival was the next production on the agenda. Each class presented a play, and awards were presented to the following for various ratings: Best Play, The junior class for its play, *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*; Best Actor, Larry Grace; Best Actress, Susie Levering; Best Director, Ken Amidon.

The last production of the year was the junior class play, *Our Town*. The play was a big hit, and the juniors are to be congratulated on their presentation of this great play. The last event of the year was our formal initiation. A banquet was held, and at that time, members were initiated and new officers installed. In all, this year was a very successful one, and I know that the Arvada Thespian Troupe will continue to carry on the good work. — Virginia Waldorf, Secretary

MIAMI, FLORIDA

Troupe 495

After the March '59 under-the-stars production of *Romeo and Juliet*, we had a tremendously talented group which we took advantage



The Robe, Troupe 117, Suffolk, Va., H.S., Frances Kitchin, Sponsor



Annie Get Your Gun, Troupe 57, Columbus, Ind., Sr. H.S., Mildred Murray, Sponsor

of and breezed through a year of beautifully produced plays — *King and I*, *Henry VIII*, *The Night of January 16th*, *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*, and *The Staring Match*. But, alas, our actors graduated, and we began 1960-61 with only two Thespians who had had leading roles. This year the emphasis was placed on building experienced actors and with a rip-roaring *Annie Get Your Gun* (with orchestra), the old-fashioned *Dirty Work at the Crossroads* (with Little Theater turned into red-checkered tabled bar for the four nights running), followed by the impressive *Were You There?* done in neighboring churches during Easter week, and the rib-tickling *See How They Run* we once again have an experienced crew. After catching our breaths during the summer (and presenting *Dirty Work* at some beach hotels) we can hardly wait to begin next year. — *Sandra Stewart, Vice-president*

WADLEY, GEORGIA

Troupe 2045

The Wadley Chapter of the National Thespian Society completed an active and successful year under its advisor, R. L. Wooddy. Three one-acts, *The Wall*, *Murder They Say*, and *Hold onto Your Hat*, were presented during the first semester. These plays were student directed and produced. The Thespians also did *In 25 Words or Death* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, which were well accepted by the audience. *The Diary* proved to be a challenge and great experience for everyone who participated.

Two of our students have won scholarships to the University of North Carolina for the summer, at which they will gain much experience working with The Carolina Players. The Chapter held its annual awards night and banquet May 24, when outstanding Thespians were recognized and new officers were installed. — *Jane Smith, Clerk*

SODA SPRINGS, IDAHO

Troupe 2085

Hello, from the "Children of the Pear Tree Garden"! Here at Soda Springs High School many things have happened.

In the fall we lost our old Drama coach, Mr. Skinner, and gained a new one, Mr. Rayborn. The switch occurred during the middle of preparation for the District One-Act Play Festival. We were preparing four plays to be presented and judged by an Idaho State College Drama professor. He chose *Apple for the Teacher*. Unfortunately, we didn't do as well as we had hoped at the district festival.

Then we moved the whole student body to the new high school. The change was worth it, but it delayed our all-school play until April. The opening night of *Stage Door* was April 14, presented to a capacity audience. This play was very successful in our new high school auditorium. We are all very pleased with our new Drama coach and our new theater. — *Lois Bevins, Secretary*

GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

Troupe 811

This year National Thespian Troupe 811 had one of its most successful years in our history. The troupe kicked off the year by publishing 1,000 student directories. This was our chief fund raising project for 1960-61.

Two Thespian inductions increased the membership in our troupe. Thespian members gained points by participating in the fall play, *January Thaw*, the annual variety show, *Reflectave 60*, *The Christmas Carol*, *Brigadoon*, *Teahouse of the August Moon*, and the various phases of contest work.

GHS won first place in the Illinois District Speech contest. The contest play, *Puss in the Well*, placed second in the sectional one-act-play contest and represented GHS at the state speech contest. Betsy Urban was named a member of the allstate play cast.

Later in the year Thespian members attended the Prairie Players Civic Theatre production of *The Third Best Sport* and journeyed to Chicago to attend *Raisin in the Sun*.

The year was climaxed by the annual Thespian Stage Call Banquet. The theme "Opening Night" was carried out by the use of tele-

THESPIAN SCOREBOARD

July 1, 1961

New Troupes Added During 1960-61 By States

California	24
Ohio	14
Texas	8
Illinois	8
Washington	7
New York	7
Minnesota	6
Missouri	6
Oklahoma	6
Wisconsin	6
Florida	5
Iowa	5
Michigan	5
Georgia	4
Pennsylvania	4
Alabama	4
Montana	4
Virginia	4
Oregon	3
Colorado	3
Arkansas	3
Massachusetts	3
Louisiana	3
New Jersey	3
Indiana	2
Arizona	2
Connecticut	2
North Dakota	2
Idaho	2
Nebraska	2
New Hampshire	2
Utah	2
West Virginia	2
Kansas	1
Kentucky	1
Mississippi	1
Nevada	1
New Mexico	1
Maine	1
South Carolina	1
Wyoming	1

Total 171

2220 THESPIAN TROUPES LOCATED IN 50 STATES

•

CANADA

•

PANAMA CANAL ZONE

•

GREECE

•

OKINAWA

•

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

2220

States Having 10 Or More Troupes

Ohio	201
California	162
Illinois	148
Texas	132
Indiana	88
Iowa	85
West Virginia	85
Pennsylvania	83
Michigan	74
New York	72
Washington	71
Minnesota	66
Oregon	63
Florida	57
Kansas	52
Tennessee	49
Missouri	47
Oklahoma	46
Idaho	44
Colorado	44
Wisconsin	40
Virginia	38
Alabama	35
Nebraska	35
Arkansas	30
Montana	27
New Jersey	27
Connecticut	26
Georgia	25
Louisiana	25
Massachusetts	25
Maryland	25
Arizona	23
Wyoming	21
South Dakota	18
Utah	17
Kentucky	15
North Dakota	13
New Mexico	11
New Hampshire	10
North Carolina	10

grams as place cards. Theatre programs, ticket stubs, and a large "Oscar" served as decoration. Dr. William Gee, head of the Western Illinois University Drama Department, was the speaker. Highlight of the evening was the presentation of the traditional "Oscars." These were presented to the best crew head, best student director, best sophomore, best supporting actor, best supporting actress, best actor, best actress, and the Best Thespian. — *Nancy Kreps, Vice-president*

BLOOMINGTON, IND.

Troupe 142

The dramatic club of Bloomington High School, the Senior Proscenium Players, presented *Harvey*, a three-act play written by Mary Chase. In November of 1960 the play was given for the entire student body.

BROADWAY LINE-UP

BYE, BYE, BIRDIE (Shubert), musical comedy, Chita Rivera, Dick Van Dyke.

CAMELOT (Majestic), musical comedy, Richard Burton, Julie Andrews.

CARNIVAL (Imperial), musical comedy, Anna Marie Alberghetti.

DO RE MI (St. James), musical comedy, Phil Silvers.

FIORIELLO (Broadway), musical comedy, Tom Bosley, Pat Stanley.

MARY, MARY (Hayes), comedy, Barbara Bel Geddes, Barry Nelson, Michael Wilding.

MY FAIR LADY (Hellinger), musical comedy, Michael Allinson, Margot Moser.

SOUND OF MUSIC (Lunt-Fontanne), musical drama, Mary Martin.

UNSINKABLE MOLLY BROWN (Winter Garden), musical comedy, Tammy Grimes.

Gordon Whitaker, chosen recently as the Best Thespian for 1960-61, expertly portrayed Elwood P. Dowd in the story of a kindly but odd brother who has an unusual, close friend — a six foot, six inch rabbit, whose name is, no less — Harvey. Reva McCoy, a Thespian and Best Actress for 1960-61, played the lightly, nervous sister of Dowd, Veta Louise.

Mr. Roberts, written by Joshua Logan, was selected and presented by the senior class of 1961 in March of '61. This comical yet touching story involves an American officer in command of a cargo vessel during the second World War, who doesn't want to transfer toilet tissue and toothpaste to needy soldiers, but wants to see some real action aboard a destroyer. Mr. Roberts, brilliantly portrayed by Robert Shields, captured the respect and admiration of his crew. Even the hard-hearted captain, played by Bill Bruce, learned that this brilliant officer was no pushover and — after a long and hard struggle, the beloved Mr. Roberts gets transferred to a destroyer — and is killed by a Japanese suicide plane.

A one-act play, *The Lottery*, was presented by the Sr. Proscenium Players on Drama Night, May 19, 1961. Drama Night is held each May. This is a night when all of the talent of BHS is on display for everyone to see — free! *Plato's Place*, a one-act beatnik play, written and directed by our dramatic coach and Thespian sponsor, Glenn Crane, was also given on Drama Night. — *Reva McCoy, Secretary*

NASHUA, IOWA

Troupe 940

The Nashua High School presented four successful stage productions this past year. Under the direction of a new dramatics teacher

1961 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1962

FLORIDA (Central)	Mainland High School, Daytona Beach, Edith Larson, Sponsor, Troupe 35, Program Chairman, February 24.
GEORGIA	Mercer University, Macon, Mrs. John Seanor, State Director and Sponsor, Troupe 90, Fitzgerald High School, February 16, 17.
MARYLAND	Morgan State College, Baltimore, Md., Anna May Hughes, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1277, Frederick High School, October 14.
OHIO (Northeastern)	Harding High School, Warren, Ohio, Kathleen Kelly, Sponsor, Troupe 1249, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, State Director, October 21.
OHIO (Southwestern)	North College Hill High School, Cincinnati, Ronald Longstreth, Sponsor, Troupe 269, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, State Director, December 2.
OHIO (Northwestern)	Bowling Green High School, Troupe 1489, Florence E. Hill, State Director, November 11.
OKLAHOMA	Central High School, Oklahoma City, Maybelle Conger, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 822, March 10.
OREGON	University of Portland, Portland, Wes Tolliver, Sponsor, Troupe 1634, Union High School, Beaverton, Conference Chairman; Melba Day Sparks, State Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1782, Madison High School, Portland, January 26, 27.

the junior class presented in the fall *Harvey* by Mary Ellen Chase. *The Singing Freshman*, an operetta by Kim Bennett, was given in January by the vocal department under the guidance of the Thespian Society. The Thespian Play, featuring freshman and sophomore students, was staged in February. It was the Shakespearean production of *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream*. The scenery of this play was well designed by the students and teacher of our art department. The senior class play, given in April, was Mark Twain's comedy, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

Thespian Initiation was held on the evening of May 10 with 20 members initiated into the Thespian Society. All in all this year has been very successful in the line of Thespian activities. — Winnett Carpenter, Secretary

HAYS, KANSAS Troupe 234

Thespian Troupe 234 began its highly successful 1960-61 year with the play, *Best Foot Forward*, presented by the junior class. During the debate season Hays High participated in eleven tournaments, winning one 1st place trophy, two 2nd place trophies, and two 3rd place trophies. The 1st place award was won at the district meet where the school four-man team received eleven first-speaker ratings and qualified for the state tournament.

Hays presented two dramatic productions in the spring. First to be given was the all-school play, a comedy entitled *The Curious Savage*. The Speech II students gave *Ladies in Retirement* as a class project. On May 22 the Hays Thespians rounded out the year by initiating new members and giving out awards. — Sally Saunders, Reporter

COVINGTON, KENTUCKY Troupe 154

The just ended school year of 1960-61 was a year of great change for Troupe 154 of Holmes High School. We began the year with a new director, Douglas W. Robinson, who replaced our former director, Don Poston. We regretted Mr. Poston's departure, but happy to receive Mr. Robinson, who guided us through a very delightful year of comedies and different approaches to acting and staging.

Productions of the year: in October, a one-act comedy, *Box and Cox*; in December, *The Curious Savage*; in March, The Junior Class Revue; in April, *The Variety Show*; and in June, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*.

September, 1960, found us with 20 old members who chose to be active, and during try-out week 40 new members were elected to membership. Of the 40 new members 19 became National Thespians.

With the end of our first year with our new director such a delightful one, we are eagerly looking forward to next year. Due to change of time allotment for class schedules, our activities, clubwise, have been few in comparison with the past, but next year we hope to expand to more productions. — Max Honeycutt, Secretary

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA Troupe 1972

LIGHTS! Highlighting this profitable year of 1960-61 for Warren Easton Dramatics Club members have been several memorable events: The annual sophomore-junior play, *Maudie and the Opposite Sex!* The Speech Festival in which four one-actors competed. *Senior Freedom*, an exciting drama won! A *Sunny Morning*, State Rally entry, rated Superior!

CAMERA! Dramatics Stars shone in the Christmas pageant and *A Christmas Carol*; later in the Talent Show. Finally, the camera focuses on seniors as they star in *Ask Any Girl* Friday, May 12.

ACTION! At the Thespian Initiation luncheon May 23 we bade farewell to our faithful seniors. With renewed vitality our sophomores and juniors will begin plans for another year of exacting but pleasurable dramatic activity. Easton, proud to claim the only New Orleans public school membership in the National Thespian Society, will induct into its Troupe 1972 seventeen new members who are so proud of this honor. — Gerry Alexius, Secretary

PORTLAND, MAINE Troupe 1745

Troupe 1745 of Deering High School opened its season by producing an original musical, *The Jesse James Story*, which was written by Thespian Robert Elowitch of the senior class. It was favorably received on Thanksgiving night by an audience of over 1,000.

In March the senior class play, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, was produced under the direction of William Burgess, troupe sponsor. The production was hailed by students and adults alike. The scenery for the production was the most ambitious attempted by the troupe. It was the first production of the play in the state of Maine.

New members of the National Thespian Society were initiated late in May to round off a successful and challenging year of dramatic productions. — Ann Ramsay, Secretary

GLEN BURNIE, MARYLAND Troupe 1288

With the singing of carols Glen Burnie High students were introduced to dramatics with *The Vision*, a Christmas drama. Presented for school assemblies, *The Vision* was viewed by 2200 students. A Bavarian cobbler's shop set the scene for a moving drama concerning the spiritual rebirth of an embittered man.

Witches on broomsticks invaded Glen Burnie High for the senior play, *The Broom and the Groom*, an uproarious comedy. The interior sets of the newlyweds' home reflected the modern ideas of today with professional touches. At the night performances the audience was invited to visit back stage and look over the sets.

In the annual spring One-Act Play Night, the seniors captured first place with *The Ugly Duckling*. They also netted best actor, actress, and supporting actor. The juniors came close



Wendy Firman and Bill Greenwood, Thespian Troupe 469, Wenatchee, Wash., High School, admire the silver trophy cups which they won as Best Actress and Best Actor, International Drama Festival, Oliver, B.C.

COMING YOUR WAY

BILLY BUDD, drama, Peter Ustinov, Robert Ryan. (AA)

EL CID, drama, Charlton Heston, Sophia Loren. (AA)

BARABBAS, drama, Anthony Quinn, Silvana Mangano, Jack Palance, Ernest Borgnine. (COL)

THE NOTORIOUS LANDLADY, comedy, Jack Lemmon, Kim Novak, Fred Astaire. (COL)

MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY, adventure drama, Marlon Brando, Trevor Howard, Hugh Griffith, Tarita. (MGM)

KING OF KINGS, Biblical drama, Jeffrey Hunter, Siobhan McKenna. (MGM)

MY GEISHA, comedy, Shirley MacLaine, Yves Montand, Robert Cummings, Edward G. Robinson. (PAR)

THE MUSIC MAN, musical, Robert Preston, Shirley Jones. (WAR)

MAJORITY OF ONE, comedy, Rosalind Russell, Alec Guinness. (WAR)

behind with the best supporting actress in *Fog on the Valley*, followed by the sophomores who produced *The Lottery*.

Through these performances, twenty-two students were inducted at the spring induction of Troupe 1288. — *Sandy Callander, Secretary*

NORTHAMPTON, MASS. Troupe 411

Shall we survive or shall we perish?
Are we condemned to lose this little troupe we cherish?

There are nine hundred students in our high school, but of these only twenty-one are Thespians. The hope of initiating more members is lessened because of the recent change in the curriculum to triple sessions. Yet, in spite of this, several drama groups have been formed and have worked on several productions. The junior and senior section of the Green Room Players has presented three one-act plays, *Dark Brown*, *The Ugly Duckling*, and *Passion*, *Poison*, and *Petrification*, the last being chosen to represent Northampton High School at Regional Drama Festival. The sophomore branch played host to the elementary school children when it produced *The Stolen Prince*, a Chinese fantasy, and the freshman were busy preparing an adaptation of *Tom Sawyer*.

Because of the inadequate conditions and unavailable space, our rather informal meetings are held once a month at the homes of various members. A speaker from the theatre department at Smith College, a presentation of home-made marionettes by a fellow Thespian, and attendance at theatre productions are only a few of the many activities which we enjoy. We all encourage as many other students as we can to become interested in dramatics and to earn those ten highly prized points which are required for Thespian membership. But, unless more members are added to our troupe, we shall not be. We sincerely hope that we can continue to uphold the Thespian motto: "Act well your part; there all the honor lies." — *Sandra Tomolillo, Reporter*

MIDLAND, MICHIGAN Troupe 902

Two "firsts" were achieved by members of Midland Senior High School's dramatic organizations, holding their annual spring banquet on May 17, 1961. It was the first time alumni have been invited to the event. The program that followed featured the first production of *Keep Smilin'*, an original one-act written by one of Troupe 902's distinguished alumni, Dixie L. Rinehart of Edwards Air Force Base; and the first production of *Utopia*, an original one-act written and directed by the Troupe's graduating president, Thora Johannson. Both plays and the idea of inviting alumni to return for the occasion were received enthusiastically. It may well be that a precedent has been established at Midland Senior High School — *Leitha Perkins, Sponsor*

OWATONNA, MINN.

Troupe 971

Thespian Troupe 971 had a very interesting year as they decided to study and produce Thornton Wilder's two dramas, *The Matchmaker* and *Our Town*. We had a wonderful challenge, especially the staging of *Matchmaker*, difficult for our stage. Our initiation was the high point of the Thespian Activity program, and our Talent Show was exceptionally good. The year's activities were climaxed by a theatre party to St. Paul to see *A Majority of One* with Berg and Hardwick. A total of forty-five new members was initiated this year. — *Karen Jellum, Secretary*

NORMANDY, MISSOURI

Troupe 837

"What's up Dob?" was a familiar ring in Normandy's Little Theatre from the 18th of April to the 21st. The drama students and Thespians of Normandy presented *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*. We were very proud of being the first high school in Missouri to present this play and of the success and happiness we had in doing it. We had terrific publicity, for many of our cast were seen on various television programs or in the major and local newspapers. The part of Maynard was written in by one of our own students, Cathie Shuenberg.

The last performance of the play started off the State Thespian Convention. The Thespians of Troupe 837 are very proud of their successful year with two dramatic productions, which were *Stage Door* and *Dobie Gillis*. Our Thespian induction was held on the 19th of May, and I hope the new Thespians will enjoy another year like this one has been, working with our wonderful sponsor, Colleen Wilkinson. — *Cherlyn Gardner, Secretary*

HAYRE, MONTANA

Troupe 869

One of the most memorable experiences in the high school career of certain Thespians is the time they directed an opportunity play — a one-act giving freshmen and sophomores the "opportunity" to demonstrate their dramatic talents. This year we had four, each one with a student director and assistant director under one faculty advisor.

The plays were *Billy Buys an Orchid*, an amusing story of the troubles a teen-age boy has when he buys his first corsage for a girl; *Little Darling*, the revolt of a little sister against an older sister's domineering and man-stealing ways; *The Ugly Duckling*, the efforts of a king and queen to marry off their ugly daughter, who finally turns out to be the beautiful swan of the fairy tale; *The First Mrs. Paris*, a mythical version of the very beginning of the Trojan War with Paris, befuddled by Greek gods and beautiful goddesses, and his impetuous, countrified first wife.

Backed by this experience, several of these people have already gone on directly to important parts in all-school plays, becoming a good nucleus for our future Thespian troupes. — *Karen Fjosee, Scribe*

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Troupe 950

The school year of 1960-1961 was an exciting and a rewarding one for Thespian Troupe 950. One of our first activities was an original Christmas pageant based on "living Christmas Cards" which included, along with our speech choir and tableaux, an orchestra and a vocal choir. Written and directed by our sponsor, Margaret Nielsen, the show proved to be an inspirational experience for all those connected with it.

"Never Be Afraid" was the theme of our Children's Theatre play, *Greensleeves' Magic*. A double cast presented this delightful fantasy to over 10,000 children in ten performances.

Our senior class play, *A Man Called Peter*, is the highlight of our year. We feel that in presenting this play, we are bringing to our audience more than just the story of Peter Marshall's wonderful life, but also a message of faith and love of God that is so needed by all of us in our world today. — *Tommie Alexis, Historian*

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BOULDER CITY, NEVADA

Troupe 2037

A little more organized and a little more ambitious, members of Troupe 2037 began their 2nd year as Thespians. Molly Tyree and Susan Bachman were bubbling over with new ideas and tales to tell about their experiences at the National Dramatics Arts Conference.

The all school play, *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*, and the speech class play, *Remarkable Incident at Carson Corners*, provided means for earning final points for aspiring Thespians. As a result, we held our first initiation.

Thespians returned from the State Forensics Tournament with honors. *The Wall*, our one-act play, was judged in first place, and we also had 2nd and 3rd place winners in the speech divisions.

Our year was climaxed with another initiation, and a barbeque dinner at the home of our sponsor, Mrs. Garrett. — *Molly Tyree, President*

ROCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE Troupe 823

Did you ever try to imagine the situation which would arise if the students were given control of their high school for a day? This very day is portrayed in *Paint the Town Pink*. The comedy is hilarious with a school board member sitting in a freshly painted chair, a cage of white mice upset in the principal's office, and the whole school existing in a state of turmoil. The students enjoyed working on this play as much as the audience did seeing it.

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The following week Thespian Troupe 823 produced *Mistress Minx*. This is a colorful costume play set at Haver Castle, the Boleyn family home in early England. Troupe members were rewarded for their efforts by placing first in the state competition at the University of New Hampshire. We received a rating of "excellent." Two members of the cast were chosen for the all-New Hampshire cast—Candace Cooper and Dianne Tebbets. Dianne received the honor for the second year, the first time in the history of Spaulding's troupe.

The cast then journeyed to Newton, Massachusetts, for the New England's where they received a rating of "very good" and another first was scored with a troupe member selected for the all-New England cast. — *Candace Cooper, Secretary*

DUNELLEN, NEW JERSEY

Troupe 374

The National Thespian Troupe 374 has been established in Dunellen High School for many years. Once a year we induct new members who have acquired the qualifications of being a Thespian, and we say good-bye to the graduating senior Thespians.

On May 24, 1961, the Dramatics Club of Dunellen High put on a *Little Theatre Evening*, in which both Thespians and regular members of the Club participated in several one-act plays, skits, and monologues.

Every spring the Club goes to New York City to see a professional play. This year the Troupe saw *The Miracle Worker*.

At the annual awards assembly, Thespians are given pins or other awards for some outstanding dramatic achievement. — *Maria Calabro, Secretary*

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO Troupe 286

Ever try producing a double cast play? Troupe 286 did, and the school thought it a great success. Our school is brand new and *You, the Jury* seemed to hit the spot for the second play. It was a courtroom drama in which the audience participates as the jury. The audience decided the fate of the defendant, Barbara Scott, by hand vote. The trial then proceeded on the basis of this verdict.

Under the direction of Howard Mensch, Troupe 286 has produced two plays, a junior skit, and a school-wide talent show. Every member of the troupe has participated in some way during the year. The installation of fourteen new members to Troupe 286 concluded a very successful year. — *Laurene Dubuque, Secretary*

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LOCUST VALLEY, NEW YORK Troupe 1101

We have always liked to start off the year with a piece that is fast and funny. We chose Josefina Niggli's *Sunday Costs Five Pesos*. Nothing like costumes, fast lines, and a fight to keep the audience happy! And the crew built a gem of a little Mexican square. We had to do the show several more times than we had planned. At the same time fifteen other members were working on a more serious one-acter called *The Dress*. By then it was November and we (and The Concert Choir) began rehearsing an original pageant, written by our sponsor Laurence Bory, called *Christmas Cards*. After a month of "studio" practice for ourselves, we organized to do John Patrick's *The Curious Savage* on March 23, 24. The success of this show just warmed us up for Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial by Jury* which followed in May. For our venture into the classics, a few of our senior members finished the year with the first part of Sophocles *Antigone*. Oh, yes, we were inducted as Troupe 1101 at the Long Island Theatre Arts Festival on May 13th, a real high point of the year. — *Nora Telese, President*



Everyman, Troupe 264, Parkersburg, W. Va., H.S., Grace-Marie Merrill, Sponsor

CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO Troupe 1365

As we are a new troupe in the National Thespian Society, I felt that we should tell you how we appreciate being a member of such an organization. Being in the society has helped to boost the interest and morale of students interested in dramatic arts.

We have had much success for our first year. We produced three fine plays that received very good audience reaction. The administration at Kenston High School was very much pleased with the quantity and quality of the dramatics program.

Our biggest success was a one-act play, *Antic Spring*, which we did at Chardon, Ohio, for a county one-act play contest and received a superior rating. At a play festival in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, we received a very good critics' judgment, and I was selected "Best Actor" out of five schools participating.

Four of the students in our troupe are taking dramatic lessons at near-by Chagrin Little

Theatre, which is evidence of the evergrowing interest in dramatic arts at our school.

We are now eagerly looking forward to our next school year in which we hope to grow even more in dramatic arts. Since we have had a good year and an increase in community interest, our next year ought to be even better. We owe a lot to the National Thespian Society in aiding interest of dramatic arts in our school. — *Chris Westphal, President*

EL RENO, OKLAHOMA Troupe 1613

Troupe 1613 of El Reno High School completed the busiest year in the life of its chapter. Besides presenting the all school play, *The Death and Life of Larry Benson*, the senior class play, *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*, and six one-act plays during the noon hour, our Thespians worked with the music department more closely than in previous

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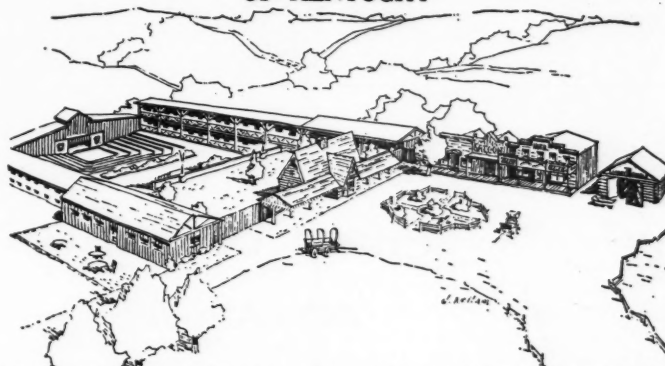
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years in writing continuity for and performing in talent and variety shows.

Thespians made up most of the members of the choral readers at the annual Christmas Music Concert, participated in the Band Carnival Talent show, and wrote the continuity for the annual music show, *The Roaring Twenties*.

Our Thespian Society held eight meetings during the year (the first Friday of every month), held two initiations (Fall and Spring), and entertained guests and members at an annual costume dance and buffet in March. But we think the best thing we've learned is cooperation with all departments in our school in their activities, and in doing this we've helped to up-grade all programs at El Reno High School. — *Martha Sedberry, Treasurer*

MEDFORD, OREGON

Troupe 358

Our fall 1960 project of Troupe 358 was the production of *The Tea House of the August Moon*. Upon completion of our fall play many busy Thespians began preparing for trips to the Portland University Speech Arts Festival and the State Thespian Conference at the University of Oregon. Shortly after the meets were over, we began rehearsal of Jean Giraudoux's fabulous *The Madwoman of Chailiot*. When Spring had fully sprung, we held our annual Spring Honor Banquet at which we initiated 19 new members, installed new officers, and gave senior pins and awards. As school and another successful year for Troupe 358 drew to a close, everyone headed to our swim-party where the hopes and plans for next year were as thick as Thespians in the pool. Everyone there enjoyed themselves. They had a right to—it was their hours of hard work that made our year what it was, the best one yet! — *Nola Robbins, Secretary*

CLEARFIELD, PA.

Troupe 2078

Late in May Troupe 2078 celebrated its first anniversary. Looking back over the year's accomplishments, we feel we have laid a firm foundation for the thespians of the future.

Our two three-act plays, *Harvey* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, illustrated sophisticated humor and stark drama. We also did three one-act plays of significant merit.

In April of 1961 seven troupe members attended the Regional Drama Conference at Pennsylvania State University. Last spring we initiated 16 new members into our troupe. A formal initiation and a banquet was held to welcome the new members and their guests.

We are already considering certain challenging plays for next year. It is our sincere wish that 1961-62 will be another profitable year for Troupe 2078. — *Edie Lou Robinson, Scribe*

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA Troupe 1591

Troupe 1591 presented two full-length plays during the school year. Both our senior class play, *Time Out for Ginger*, and our junior play, *Ask Any Girl*, played to full houses; new members for our troupe were selected from each production.

A change of dramatic pace came in the spring with the presentation of an original one-act psychological drama, *Hold My Hand*, at the Palmetto Dramatic Festival held at Winthrop College in Rock Hill. This play, which was written by our troupe president, won the Best Original One-Act Play Award at the festival. The author, Bennett Tarleton, playing a role in his play, won one of three "honorable mentions" for the Best Actor Award. Our members also helped to stage the annual May Day Program, using a *South Pacific* theme, and the annual glee club program. — *Bennett Tarleton, President*

HOT SPRINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA Troupe 488

The years 1960-61 marked the beginning of a new season for Troupe 488, and under a new director. Work began with a production of Ken and Vera Tarpley's comedy, *The Little Dog Laughed*, the story of a psychology major who upsets her family and the neighborhood



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by "psychologizing" everyone around until her family decides to give the doctor some of her own medicine. In the spring the annual junior class play was given: Cornelia Otis Skinner's *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*. Everyone, cast, crew, and audience, thoroughly enjoyed the gay humor of the "emancipated" Emily and Cornelia on their first trip to Paris. The two interiors that the play called for, minor as the changes are, proved an interesting innovation in our Thespian work, since previous productions had had only the one set. To round out the year the senior Thespians, following tradition, directed three one-act plays with the cast made up of interested but non-Thespians. The plays given were Oscar Wilde's *The Infanta*; a medieval farce, *The Shoemaker's Wife*; and a modern comedy, *Last Night's Paper*. The variety was enjoyable.

The year ended with a formal initiation ceremony in which forty-four new Thespians were added to our group. — Imogene De Smet, Sponsor

PULASKI, TENNESSEE

Troupe 1679

Thespian Troupe 1679 opened the curtain for the season 1960-61 by purchasing furniture to be used in play production. A "favorite" with the student body was *Sunstroke*, which was presented at an assembly program. *Lost Victory* won second place in the District contest of the Tennessee High School Speech and Drama League. Peggy Melby, a member of the cast, was selected as Best Actress in the district. As a climax to a very successful year, An Evening of Plays, consisting of four one-acts, was presented.

Three faculty members selected Best Actress, Best Actor, and Best Play of the year. Royce Springer and Charles Fowler won the Best Actress and Best Actor awards, respectively. *The Summons of Sarel* was judged the Best Play of the Year. Royce Springer was voted Best Thespian.

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The curtain was closed for the season following the initiation of fourteen new members into the Troupe. — Etta Gross, President

OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

Troupe 1673

It's been a big year. This fall our first production was *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay* by Cornelia Otis Skinner. Because our sponsor, John F. Leonard, is also Washington Thespian State Director, we were planning the State Thespian Conference at the same time. The conference was held at the University of Washington and was a great success with more than 265 in attendance.

Near the middle of the year we put on our annual children's play, and this year it was *Alice in Wonderland*. We presented it four times in one of the local theatres, and some three thousand grade school children came to see it.

In the spring we gave *Three on the Aisle*, which was an arena style presentation of three one-act plays. The plays were *The Marriage Proposal*, a shortened version of *She Stoops to Conquer*, and *Sunday Costs Five Pesos*.

It's been a big year, we've enjoyed it, and we're all looking forward to producing more plays and planning another conference next year. — Loretta Neuquist, Secretary

EL PASO, TEXAS

Troupe 2099

Students who have labored long and arduously under lights, backstage, and memorizing lines are acutely aware of the honor it is to be a Thespian. When the time for the initiating of new members came, we hit on a typically dramatic way to make our ceremony, and the honor even more impressive. We kidnapped the unsuspecting initiates! We did this in togas which further carried out the dramatic effect. After kidnapping the bewildered students at 7:00 in the morning, we then took them all to breakfast at a restaurant where we also had our ceremony. The new members were slightly dazed, very happy, and remarked about the special atmosphere which only a closed initiation of old and new members can bring about. Above all, the members of Troupe 2099 realized again the honor of being a Thespian. — Isabelle Navar, Secretary

GRAFTON, WEST VIRGINIA

Troupe 171

In 1959 the activities of the National Thespian Society came to a halt at Grafton High School. Lack of interest among the students and poor attendance at the plays prompted this. With the opening of the school term of 1961 there was a renewed interest in dramatics shown, and tryouts for a play were announced

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to test the extent of this interest. The response was good, and rehearsals began. The play was *Ask Any Girl*, adapted by Christopher Sergel from the book by Winifred Wolfe. This three-act comedy proved to the students and faculty that a dramatics club is needed in every school.

Our second production was the operetta *The Bamboo Princess*. Since all but two of our members were also members of the school choir, we combined our efforts with those of the choir. This gave us a chance to display, in addition to our dramatic talents, our talents in singing and dancing. The music for the operetta is by Henry Sawyer and the lyrics by Effa E. Preston. Our set was designed by the school art department. Our costumes were home made but authentic. We were assisted in this effort by two other faculty members who volunteered their assistance. Everyone cooperated to help us make *The Bamboo Princess* a production Grafton High School will long remember.

The membership in our Thespian troupe is steadily growing, and we hope to continue so that our newly re-organized troupe will be looked upon with pride by the members of our student body and faculty. — *Kathleen Milinovich, Secretary*

MUSKEGO, WISCONSIN

Troupe 1971

"The Happy Hour Nickelodeon Theatre proudly presents . . ." With this stirring announcement Troupe 1971 presented a Gay Nineties program consisting of typical Gay Nineties songs and an old fashioned melodrama, *Egad, What A Cad*, which is an example of a melodrama complete with the wicked villain, the beautiful maiden, and the manly hero.

The high point of the growing adventure arrived as the hero rushed down the center aisle of the auditorium, leaped upon the stage, and rescued the maiden from the villain, a threatening scoundrel. The brave hero won the maiden's heart because he saved her "from a fate worse than death."

Appropriate music, played from a "ricky-tick" piano accompanied the adventure. The sweet strains of "Hearts and Flowers" added a tender touch to the finale.

The play was done in the stylized acting form, complete with "asides" to the audience. The obvious and trite dialogue added to the enjoyment of the audience. — *Johna Marzu, Reporter*

RAWLINS, WYOMING

Troupe 711

The Thinking Thespians of Rawlins High engineer the dramatic end of our school. They give the weekly "Thespian Teen Time" every Saturday over the local radio station, put on make-up for all plays and the annual operetta, as well as presenting their own members in a one-act play at district speech festival. Poetry and prose reading, original oratory, and debate are also activities of the members of Thespians. Yes, the Thespians play an important role at RHS. Whether you like to argue, act, or just have a lot of fun, Thespians is the club for you. — *Carol Garbutt, Secretary*

MOBILE, ALABAMA

Troupe 852

Being handicapped for the last three years by the rebuilding of our new school, Troupe 852 had a struggle in developing the motto, "The play's the thing"; but this year after the completion of the building and the hanging of the modern curtains, the stored-up energy of each Thespian began to explode. Forty eager and willing Thespians pulled together to create a sense of dramatic culture among all in the school and the community.

Like the football team, Thespians were ready for action in September, 1960! We had had rehearsed during vacation and were ready for a full length play. This was quite an innovation.

One of our most interesting experiences was our presentation of *Children of the Moon*, in which our instructor portrayed the same role

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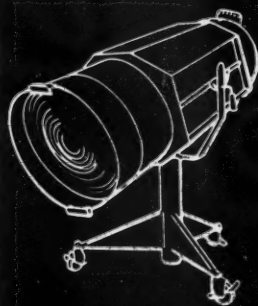
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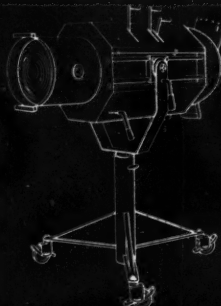
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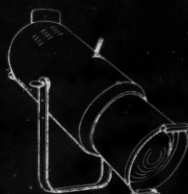
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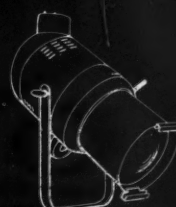
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that he did in high school - a role which won him a scholarship for college. - *Janice Wesley, President*

EAST PALO ALTO, CAL. Troupe 2017

Have you ever tried, wearing a full length nightgown, to climb on a top bunk without using a ladder? Our president, Gloria Garrison, proved to be a fine bunk-jumper, as Emily, in our fall production of *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*. Secretary Pat Toner, as Cornelia, looked like the original spotted leopard, with a death mask, when she finished powdering her face to fool the medical officer. A roaring audi-

ence fully enjoyed the three nights of fun filled acting.

During our spring play elderberry wine was served to the audience while our two little old ladies, Betty Steligo and Gloria Garrison, served *Special* elderberry wine to their gentlemen callers. Randy Kimball as Jonathan and Tom Turner as Dr. Einstein made a gruesome twosome and made *Arsenic and Old Lace* a nightmare to remember. - *Pat Toner, Secretary*

MIAMI, FLORIDA

Troupe 8

Last year Troupe 8 of Miami Edison Senior High School had one of the most successful

seasons in its history. Under the direction of the troupe's sponsor, Jay P. Fox, the Thespians presented three full-length plays as well as three pageants, two one-act plays, and a drama assembly.

At the beginning of the year our first full-length production was Pauline Hopkins' hilarious comedy, *That Brewster Boy*. This play became one of the greatest commercial successes ever presented at Miami Edison Senior High.

Our next major play was a highly acclaimed production of Ruth and Augustus Goetz' great drama, *The Heiress*. This production presented several different problems not the least of which was the cost of the period costuming. This difficulty was overcome, however, as the Thespians designed and handmade the sixteen Civil War Period gowns, including a Paris fashion, which were needed for the play. These costumes received so much acclaim that



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we were asked to lend them to other schools in the area producing period plays. Another problem which came out of this production dealt with the mood lighting which the subject and the mood of the play required. This was solved by using two front spots along with subdued general lighting which greatly heightened the atmosphere of the production and made seeing it a genuinely moving experience.

Our last play of the year was William Douglas Home's highly sophisticated and witty satire of the English upper classes, *The Reluctant Debutante*. The main difficulty that arose with production was the very complicated set. The Thespians designed a set which was ac-

claimed as the most beautiful ever seen at Miami Edison. It consisted of two main areas: the lower level which consisted of the living area of the expensive apartment, and an upper level with a latticed terrace on which much of the action took place. Behind this lattice-work we painted a backdrop of London with window lights that glowed brightly during night scenes and caused the audience to gasp as the curtains opened on the set. The split-level set was decorated with a flowered wallpaper setting off the lovely furniture and beautiful costumes perfectly and costing a few pennies less than to have used conventional paint. — Paul Corum, Scribe

TOCCOA, GEORGIA

Toccoa Thespians found the adage to be true — where there's a will there is a way! We were especially interested in producing not one but two quite difficult productions this school year, *Pygmalion* and *Inherit the Wind*, but both plays required unusually demanding male leads. None of our corps of actors wanted to tackle such roles, but our very experienced sponsor, Jack Willoughby (Mr. "Will" to us), agreed to act and direct so that we could do these particular shows. This was a gigantic undertaking for him since his teaching load was already unusually heavy this year, but happily we found if there's a will, there's a way! However, at the final blackout of *Inherit the Wind*, done in the round and with three student directors assisting him, Mr. Will was heard to sigh, "It's back to the director's chair for these tired bones next year!" — Sandra Watson, Scribe

TWIN FALLS, IDAHO

Not only the audience, but the cast as well, felt a bit misty and sentimental as the final curtain came down on the annual Thespian play presented by Troupe 256. A rare combination of human emotion and comedy, *The Curious Savage* was well received by both students and adults.

Earlier in the year the drama classes prepared and presented a night of one-act plays. From this performance *Overtures* was selected to be entered in the One-Act Play Festival where it received an excellent rating.

The Thespians, participating with the Twin High Playhouse, also presented the dramatic play, *Antigone*, and the delightful comedy, *Solid Gold Cadillac*.

The year of fun and achievement was climaxed by honor night where the awards for Best Actor, Best Actress, and Best Thespian were presented. A one-hundred dollar scholarship was also presented to the most deserving senior Thespian with plans to major or minor in speech and drama at college. — Linda Freeouf, Secretary



Don Juan in Hell, Troupe 1982, Hingham, Mass.,
H.S., Margaret A. McElroy, Sponsor

"SILENTS" BARRIER

(Continued from Page 15)

ance, however, was the discovery of post-synchronization or "dubbing." This process of adding sound later to scenes photographed by the camera (a process still in use today) freed directors from the idea that everything seen must be heard. Irrelevant sounds could be eliminated and significant sounds could be emphasized. King Vidor vividly describes his "dubbing" experience as "a fresh and unexplored adventure" when he worked on *Hallelujah!*, his remarkable portrayal of Negro life in the South:

We found ourselves making big puddles of water and mud, tramping through them with a microphone while a sound truck recorded the effect . . . why not free the imagination and record this sequence impressionistically?

When someone stepped on a broken branch, we made it sound as if bones were breaking.

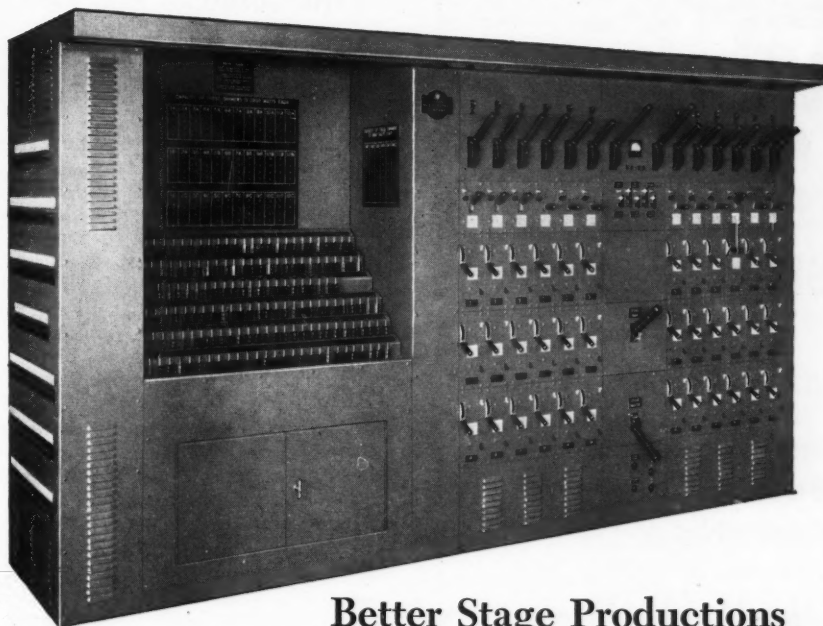
The new art of sound films — the "talkies," slowly began developing under the enterprising initiative of a new generation of movie-makers.

In addition to the myriad technological problems resulting from the shift to sound films, however, of greater significance



Gloria Swanson (at right), the "glamour queen of the silents," while filming *Queen Kelly* (1928), found herself a victim of the sound film.

ance was the human problem — the "stars" and the directors. Studios began hiring acting, directing, and writing talent from the Broadway theatre. English-born actors suddenly enjoyed a tremendous vogue because of their low-pitched, well-modulated voices. Young actors who had good voices forged ahead. The veteran matinee idol, Francis X. Bushman, shrewdly noted that sound films would eliminate "a lot of screen pets with listless dreamy voices who never had any stage training." Among the many casualties of this type was the dashing screen hero, John Gilbert (1897-1936), the romantic lover of Greta Garbo and the "star" of *The Big Parade*, whose



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film voice showed a high pitch unsuited to his screen image. His career was over as was that of many "silent" stars who became victims of the microphone.

On July 6, 1928, the first 100% all-talking film, Warner Brothers' *Lights of New York*, a simple story about the country boy coming to the big city, opened in New York. By April, 1929, more than 40 sound stages were operating in Hollywood, and by the end of the year some 4,000 theatres were equipped for sound. Both Warners and Fox were now filming all-talking pictures only. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, after several films with talking sequences, introduced the first original musical film, *The Broadway Melody* (1929) and followed it with

their first all-talking dramatic film, *The Trial of Mary Dugan* (1929). Some were still skeptical of the new era as Bosley Crowther has succinctly stated:

The art of the silent motion pictures, based firmly upon graphic pantomime, had become so established and familiar that it was extremely difficult to conceive how a fluent method — let alone an artistic improvement — could be achieved by having actors speak words.

The "father" of American films, D. W. Griffith, commented: "We have taken beauty and exchanged it for stilted voices." Still, as Al Jolson had so prophetically stated, "You ain't heard nothin' yet," the American public was obviously ready and waiting to hear anything. The era of the sound films had begun.

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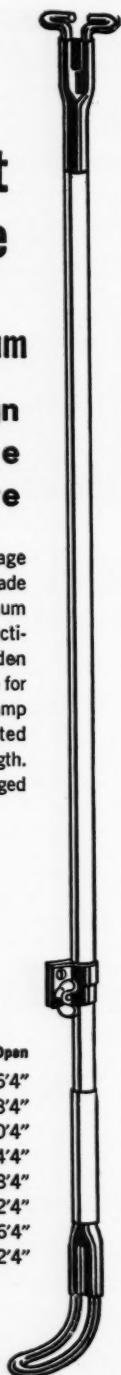
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THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

(Continued from Page 13)

to the last milligram a human being, but he does not know how to get along with him peaceably. Man does not know how to live fully. How does this apply to theatre? You ask, "Are you telling us we should all major in theatre when we get to college?" No, not necessarily, although many of you will I am sure. More important to me is that you realize *theatre provides a road to the goal of being liberally educated*. Theatre, after all, is the most eclectic of the arts. It utilizes written drama, music, dance, painting, and acting, to name just a few. I suppose there is no other field which gives as much attention to educating the whole person as does theatre. In the dance and pantomime physical training is given; in scene design opportunity is provided for graphic expression; in acting there is occasion to satisfy the basic psychological need of self-expression as well as learning what makes people tick; and in performing the great plays one encounters some of the best that has been thought and said since men learned to think and speak.

All of this probably sounds rather lofty and high-sounding. To put it in simpler terms I guess I am asking you not to underestimate the liberal arts in the first place, and in the second place, to view theatre as something much more than a worthy use of leisure time. It is ironic that theatre has such a struggle to gain recognition when it really has the best case. Not only can we point to its glorious past but, as we have already observed, it is more concerned with educating the whole man than any of the arts. But part of the problem is that many of us forget this ourselves or we fail to remind our fellow students what theatre really is. We let them think it is nothing more than a kind of "show business" which exists only for the periodic diversion of men who devote most of their time to more serious things. We do nothing to alter the opinion of those who think of it in terms of twenty-minute entertainments for women's clubs who "need a program," or "something to fill out the activities program at school," or simply a socializing activity where "you get to meet other people." All of this is part of what we do, certainly, but it should not be our reason for existence. We must learn to fight a little more for our proper place. After discovering what theatre really is all about ourselves, we have got to persuade others.

Finally, let us not forget those who have pursued this way of life before us—not only the Kathryn Cornells, John Barrymores, Sarah Bernhards, and Edwin Booths, but the O'Neills, Shaws, Molières and Shakespeares as well, all of whom were men of the theatre whether they were working in it or writing for it. No apology seems necessary, then, when you are in this troupe, if there is any truth to the adage "a man is known by the company he keeps."

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TIME IS SHORT. T. Coleman Andrews.

THE TRAGIC SITUATION IN CUBA. Senator Barry Goldwater.

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THE WEAPON KHRUSHCHEV CAN'T MATCH. J. K. Stern.

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MARY MILLER

(Continued from Page 12)

One-Track Mind, *Young April*, *Midnight, Lease on Liberty*, *Every Family Has One*, and *Letters to Lucerne*; and the late forties saw productions of *The Fighting Littles*, *Come Over to Our House*, *Tonight We Dance*, and *The Divine Flora*. Since 1950 there have been performances of *Fog Island*, *The Thirteenth Chair*, *Pink Magic*, *'SNo Haven*, *Stag Line*, *Boarding House Reach*, *Andy Hardy*, *Dr. Hudson's Secret Journal*, *Danger from the Sky*, *You, the Jury*, and *Flight into Danger*. The senior class plays have included *The Royal Family*, *The Charm School*, *320 College Avenue*, *Tish*, *Incognito*, *Tattletale*, *Our Miss Brooks*, and *Penny*.

Three of the plays presented in Danville have a special significance, for they were written as well as directed by Miss Miller. In the early 1950's she and her sister, under the pennames of "Lee and Lynde Miller," collaborated in writing these plays, which are distinguished by their scrupulous attention to technical detail and careful stage directions. *'SNo Haven*, first produced February 11, 1953, was published the same year by the Banner Play Bureau (with the design from the Danville printed program reproduced on the front cover); *Boarding House Reach*, premiered on February 10, 1955, was published in 1956 under the title *Murder Walks among Us* (with a picture of the Danville cast on the back cover); and *Remember the Mayne* was performed on May 7, 1954, as the senior class play. Last February 10 *'SNo Haven* was repeated, appropriately, as Miss Miller's final Dramatic Club play (and her only repetition of a play in the 36 years).

Just before that last performance of *'SNo Haven*, a columnist for the Danville *COMMERCIAL-NEWS*, Alden Bracewell, wrote nostalgically about his "memories of a teacher who first introduced a sober-minded high school youth to the magic footlight world." He continued, "Many plots and situations have unfolded on the DHS stage since that time, longer ago than we like to realize, when Miss Miller gave her first words of advice to this eager but self-conscious beginner." Referring to the "hundreds of others" who have learned under her such principles as "the conquering of fear and self-doubt and the devotion to details and duty" which "might be the most valuable lessons taught in school if they were applied off stage," he described her as a person who has "practiced as well as preached these attributes."

Such sentiments would be echoed by all the alumni of Troupe 59. And all would agree that Miss Miller's influence will not end with her retirement, for she has made the drama an essential part of her community. Mary Miller, during the past thirty-six years, has acted her part with faithfulness and distinction, even though it lay behind the scenes.



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BRIEF VIEWS

By EUGENE K. BRISTOW

BOOKS

THORNTON WILDER by Rex Burbank. 1961, Twayne Publishers; 156 pp.

Biographical as well as critical, Professor Burbank's study is the first full-length work published about Thornton Wilder. Although winner of three Pulitzer Prizes — one in fiction and two in drama — Wilder is one of the most neglected of major American writers. Burbank covers five novels and four plays, analyzing each work and relating it to the whole. *Our Town*, *The Matchmaker*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth* have been grouped as theatricalist plays, while Wilder's newest play, *The Alcestiad*, has been described as "an existentialist allegory portraying the mystic's pilgrimage." High school directors and students will welcome this critical and significant view of Thornton Wilder.

PREFERRED SEATS by Charles H. Minor. 1961, Arco Publishing Co.; 95 pp.

Here is the current list of seating diagrams for arenas and theatres in and around New York City. Together with postal zone map of Manhattan and list of garages and parking areas in the Times Square District, *Preferred Seats* should prove quite useful to the theatre tourist.

MARTHA GRAHAM, edited and designed by Karl Leabo. 1961, Theatre Arts Books; 48 pp.

Mr. Leabo's book combines pictures with text to describe the life and art of Martha Graham. Photographs have been dramatically selected and provide — as well as the still shot can — the famous dancer-choreographer at work. The text flows smoothly from picture to picture. Perhaps the best section is the chronological list of dances composed by Miss Graham from 1926 to 1961. The 130 compositions show significant growth, range, and breadth over the past 35 years.

STANISLAVSKI'S LEGACY: A COLLECTION OF COMMENTS ON A VARIETY OF ASPECTS OF AN ACTOR'S ART AND LIFE, edited and translated by Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. 1958, Theatre Arts Books; 182 pp.

Elizabeth Hapgood's recent collection from Stanislavski's papers covers comments written between 1898 and 1937 and ranges from phrases to essays. Although the best of the lot — "Why Play Melodrama?" and "The Art of the Actor and Director" — has been published before, several colorful vignettes of the great actor-director appear for the first time. Two essays are quite interesting: "Back to Work — The Beginning of the Season" and "Memories of Chekhov." Nevertheless, Stanislavski's significant contribution to modern theatre must remain his own forty years of work as well as his autobiography and several manuals — not the present *Legacy*.

SHAW ON SHAKESPEARE: AN ANTHOLOGY OF BERNARD SHAW'S WRITINGS ON THE PLAYS AND PRODUCTION OF SHAKESPEARE, edited with an Introduction by Edwin Wilson. 1961, E. P. Dutton; 284 pp.

Collecting Shaw's criticism of Shakespearean plays and production, Edwin Wilson has provided an outstanding anthology with an excellent Introduction. Shaw's criticism of Shakespeare spanned more than sixty years, and typical Shavian remarks, such as Shakespeare was "for an afternoon, but not for all time," and "I despise Shakespeare when I measure my mind against his," have provoked hoots of

protest as well as cries of "sour grapes." Fortunately, Mr. Wilson's collection has clarified — in some measure — the controversy which still exists. Perhaps more than any other single writer, Shaw had the rare ability not only to create dramatic works but also to evaluate them effectively. The present collection supports Shaw's thesis that his argument with Shakespeare lay with his ideas, not his form. Shaw believed the dramatist must basically teach — not solely entertain — and in this respect, he thought Shakespeare too often content with satisfying the crowd. Coating his didactic pill with customary wit, Shaw delightfully combines both form and matter in taking Shakespeare apart and putting him back together again.

LONG PLAYS

THE AMAZING ABERNATHYS by James Reach. French, 1961. 5 M, 7 W; Scene: a living room in 1930s. Royalty: \$25. — \$20.

Adapted from the novel, *Seize a Nettle* by Ann Ritner, *The Amazing Abernathys* may be classed a family and/or youth comedy, but it falls short of its superlative title. The play covers the life and times of five women during the early Depression years, 1930-1932, in Denver. Each seems characterized rather sparsely by few singular traits. Brusque yet lovable, Grandma not only washes and irons dry her money but also dashes into a closet whenever it thunders — crying, "Oh, Lord, spare us one more time!" Her daughter-in-law, and recently-widowed, Hope remains charming and quietly courageous throughout every predictable event. Hope's three daughters too have the usual traits. Jessica, age 14, is beautiful and stubborn; Maggie, age 16, plain but shy and warm; Eugenia, age 18, resourceful and vital yet mischievous. A comparable number of boys and men matches the women. *The Amazing Abernathys* will probably demand an exceptionally strong cast and superior direction to maintain audience interest.

THE PLEASURE OF HIS COMPANY by Samuel Taylor with Cornelia Otis Skinner. Dramatists Play Service, 1961. 5 M, 2 W; Scene: a living room. Royalty: on application.

Essentially a good vehicle for Miss Skinner in conjunction with Cyril Ritchard, *Pleasure* is an above-average comedy of manners. In keeping with Barry and Behrman, Samuel Taylor places his cast of non-workers in an elite society of urbanity, wit and gracious living. Handsome, fiftyish, playboy Biddeford Poole arrives in San Francisco from Africa to give away in marriage his only daughter, Jessica, to young cattle breeder, Roger Henderson. Jessica's mother, Katharine, had divorced Poole fifteen years before and married solid citizen, Jim Dougherty. While Katharine and Poole trade gutty lines of sophisticated jargon, Poole sweeps his daughter away from Roger. Jessica finally leaves with her father for a year abroad before returning to marry Roger. High school production will require skillfully-trained actors and audiences.

MURDER ON ARRIVAL by George Batson. French, 1960. 4 M, 3 W; Scene: a living room. Royalty: \$25. — \$20. Produced successfully in England with Margaret Lockwood.

George Batson's recent *Whodunit* concerns Jane Palmer — young painter and widow — who arrives at Brook Hollow to renew her artistic and social life. Some months before, Brook Hollow had been the scene of a brutal murder — never solved — and twenty minutes

after Jane's walks in, a dead body plops into her arms. End scene one. As the play continues, suspicion taps a number of interesting characters. Successful novelist and Jane's old beau, Fred Graves, works nearby. The day maid, Marlene, disguises temperamental moods behind prim and prudish ways. Peter Collier, off-beat composer, and his wife Kitty, former model, create the usual triangle with Steve Taylor, hitch-hiking Airman, who drops in to identify the second body. By the end of Act II Steve apparently traps Jane as the poker slayer — in a scene reminiscent of *Ladies in Retirement*. However, Jane recovers her composure as well as the heroine's role, badgers the real murderer, Peter, into confessing both crimes, and stops him from committing the third by a successful pistol shot. A good production will keep audiences guessing, but require actors capable of portraying sophisticated roles.

THE GANG'S ALL HERE by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. French, 1960. 14 M, 4 W; Scene: two hotel rooms, the Executive Suite, a basement room. Royalty: \$50. — \$25.

An excellent political drama, *The Gang's All Here* touches American characteristics and issues far beyond the political scene. Basic to current problems and values, its central question, "how can we best measure leadership," is successfully interwoven throughout the fabric of the play — its plot, character, and thought. Although its conception may have been sparked by the Harding era of the 1920s, the play is not tied to a particular time, place, or party. Essentially, the story is one of Senator Griffith P. Hastings, a likable chap, who by luck, good looks, and popularity wins the presidency of the U.S.A. In turn, he is duped by his "gang" of cronies who dip quite liberally into the government till. Fortunately, the play is not simply the bad guys versus the good, for the characters have been drawn with varying shades of gray. Settings may create some problem, but can be simplified. If the play when produced is correlated with classes in government, history, and social studies, *The Gang's All Here* may well trigger free and responsible discussion throughout school and community.

SHORT PLAYS

THE THOUSAND FLERBS by Howard Gregory and John Henneberger. Eldridge, 1958. 7 M, 2 W; Scene: simultaneous sets. Royalty: \$5.

A modern fantasy, *The Thousand Flerbs* uses the Faustian theme of milktoastian husband who makes a contract to sell his soul to the devil. Once his day of pleasure is over, husband discovers that hell is to continue life with his barracuda wife. Above average in plot and theme, *Flerbs* should make an excellent production.

THE CHARM by John D. Engle, Jr. Eldridge, 1958. 3 M, 3 W; Scene: a living room about 1905. Royalty: \$5.

Based on a folk story heard by the author in Eastern Kentucky hills, *The Charm* takes place about 1905 in a backwoods area. To rid Wade's horse of sickness, Hamlin tries witchcraft which backfires, in that Wade's horse gets well but Wade's wife falls ill. Eventually the area "witch," Katrina, dies at the moment Wade's wife recovers. If selected for the proper occasion, *The Charm* has production possibilities.

THE HIDDEN HEART by Robert Finch. Eldridge, 1952. 4 M, 3 W; Scene: interior of small town grocery store. Royalty: \$5.

Sentimental drama of small town doctor who calls in big city specialist to operate on Jake's wife, Clara, who lies dying offstage. The grocer and town gossip delay getting message to specialist when Doc is out of store, and Clara dies. The "hidden heart" belongs to Doc who has loved Clara secretly during past thirty years.

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the will to succeed. As the play begins there is a lottery about to be held, the prize being "The Piebald," an undisciplined and seemingly "useless" horse whose owner has run out of patience. Mi buys Velvet a ticket—and she wins. From then on the story is one of a dream being transmuted into reality. Mi and Velvet become a team dedicated to "putting their horse into history." How they accomplish this and the obstacles which they must overcome, make **NATIONAL VELVET** an inspiring, exciting and deeply-moving experience. They win the Grand National—or almost—but this is only a small part of their victory. What Velvet learns from all this goes far deeper than momentary acclaim, and what she gives to others makes the meaning of the play one of warm and lasting human significance.

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when Meg tried her home-made statistics on the mathematically inclined Miles Doughton, head of an advertising firm Meg is caught short for the first time. Meg is caught quite differently by Miles Doughton's younger brother Evan. The girls of the boarding house agree that Evan is "no better looking than the average Greek god" and when Meg looks at him, she feels like a "marshmallow over an open fire." Seeing how Meg feels, and a little fed up with his younger brother's attitude, Miles Doughton decides to give Meg a hand in snaring Evan: Together Miles and Meg, using the latest advertising techniques, set out to trap the girl-chasing Evan into marriage. The hilarious results build to a delightful climax in which we discover that in the course of "landing" Evan — Meg and Miles have fallen in love with each other!

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